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ABSTRACT

This resource book was developed to provide information that state and local leaders can use to stimulate discussion of the problem of students at risk and support the planning of initiatives that address the problem. An overview defines students at risk, summarizes the content of the book, and lists recent reports and publications on the problem of students at risk. Section I presents eight sets of data, summarizing national and state data on the changing nature of students attending the public schools, students who do not become engaged in school activities, drug and alcohol use, delinquency, teenage pregnancy, school dropouts, teenage suicide, and student achievement. The second section reviews four lines of research that suggest that schools can be more successful with more students. The third section provides an overview of the kinds of data that school staff can use to identify students in need of assistance and educational practices in need of improvement. The fourth section provides a framework for comparing approaches that schools are trying in order to become more successful with students at risk. The final section recommends that the problem of students at risk be considered in the context of Pennsylvania's Long-Range Planning process. It provides an overview of the "Program Development Evaluation Method" and discusses obstacles frequently raised by school staff. Fifteen tables and 13 figures are included. (NB)

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Achieving Success With More Students:

Addressing the Problem of Students At Risk, K-12

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March 1987

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FOREWORD

A significant number of students in Pennsylvania are successful in our schools. They acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to become productive adults. However, many of our students behave in ways that not only limit their success in school, but may also significantly limit their future success as adults. The more extreme behaviors are well-known: dropping out, using drugs, being a delinquent, becoming pregnant, and committing suicide. Less talked about, but with similar effects, are those behaviors that demonstrate student alienation and disengagement from the school experience: not attending, not participating, and avoiding or not completing assignments.

Because of the costs of such behaviors both to the students and to society, educators are asked periodically to design and implement programs that prevent or, at least, ameliorate the effects of such behavior. For example, the Pennsylvania Department of Education has special initiatives to address delinquency, alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, teenage suicide, and dropouts (see *Education in Pennsylvania,* April 1986). Though these state initiatives and many parallel local efforts have positive effects, there have been concerns about two areas: (1) how do students' school experience relate to such behaviors? and (2) how do various programs and interventions fit with the school's primary task of helping students achieve Pennsylvania's Twelve Goals of Quality Education?

Some educators have become convinced that the best long-term strategy for addressing these problems is not through special programs and services (though we probably will always need some of these for some students), but by developing more effective partnerships with our students' families and by being more successful in achieving our goals with all of our students — particularly, those students that are now being described as "at risk."

From this perspective, the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Research for Better Schools have developed this resource book. The first two sections are provided to stimulate local discussion of:

- data that suggests the nature and scope of these problems
- research that suggests that schools can make a difference with students at risk.

The remainder of the resource book provides practical suggestions and examples of:

- how school staff can use available information to identify both individual students and school practices in need of attention
- the approaches schools and districts are taking to become more successful with students at risk
- how to plan a local program or activity.

This publication is just a beginning. PDE staff will encourage discussion of its contents and, if appropriate, develop a second edition that reflects more fully the ideas and efforts of teachers and administrators throughout Pennsylvania.

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OVERVIEW

The purpose of this resource book is to provide information that state and local leaders, concerned about the problem of students at risk, can use to: (1) stimulate discussion of the problem, and (2) support the planning of initiatives that address the problem. This overview begins with a discussion of the definition of "students at risk." It then provides a summary of the content of each of the five sections of the resource book. It briefly discusses ways to use the content of the resource book. It concludes with a list of recent reports and publications on the problem of students at risk.

Definition of Students At Risk

In this resource book, the term "students at risk" has several references. At the most general level, it refers to any elementary or secondary student who runs the risk of not acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to become successful adults — specifically, those reflected in Pennsylvania's Twelve Goals of Quality Education. Even more specifically, it refers to students who behave in ways that put them at risk of not achieving the Twelve Goals and graduating from high school. These behaviors include not engaging in classroom and school activities, using drugs and alcohol, committing disruptive and delinquent acts, becoming pregnant, dropping out, or attempting suicide — behaviors that would not be expected of students who, in particular, had acquired the knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with such goals as Self-Esteem, Citizenship, Family Living, Health, and Work. Finally, the term refers to students whose family background and home and community conditions (e.g., poverty, low parental education) correlate with low achievement and the lack of success in school.

The Nature and Scope of the Problem

This section provides a summary of some of the national and state data that suggest the nature and scope of the "student-at-risk" problem. The section presents eight sets of data.

- The first describes the changing character of students attending the public schools — for example, more students will come from poor families (1 in 4), from single parent families (1 in 5), and from minority families (1 in 3).
- The second summarizes data on students who do not become engaged in classroom and school activities. It notes that teachers on several surveys report this to be their number one problem and that significant numbers of students on Educational Quality Assessment report negative perceptions of themselves in school.
- The third summarizes data on drug and alcohol use. It notes that the decline in drug use that occurred during the early 1980's appears to have halted, that use of cocaine among high school seniors is increasing (4.9% in 1983 to 6.7% in 1985), that significant numbers of high school seniors use alcohol (65.9% nationally), and that in 1985, Pennsylvania Department of Health facilities treated 6,486 youths ages 15 to 19 for substance abuse.
- The fourth summarizes data on delinquency. It notes that, in 1985, 109,514 youths under 18 years of age in Pennsylvania were arrested, that this number accounted for approximately 27.7% of all arrests and 35% of all serious crime arrests, and that 25,688 youths in 1984 were being supervised by probation officers.
- The fifth summarizes data on teenage pregnancy. It notes that one in ten girls between the ages of 15 and 17 become pregnant each year, that this is one of the major reasons for girls dropping out of school, and that a higher proportion of babies born to a teenage mother are apt to be premature and have neurological deficits, thus requiring early intervention and special education services.
- The sixth summarizes data on school dropouts. It notes that different agencies estimate dropout rates during high school of between 14% and 28%, that dropouts were disproportionately from low socio-economic families and from racial/ethnic minority groups, and that one study found that one-third of dropouts chose the following reasons for dropping out: "did not like school" and "received poor grades."
- The seventh summarizes data on teenage suicide. It notes that the suicide rate has risen to almost three times the rate of 1955, and that in Pennsylvania in 1984, 256 youths committed suicide.

- The eighth summarizes data on student achievement. It notes that over 20% of 3rd, 5th and 8th grade students in Pennsylvania performed on the Test for Essential Learning and Literacy Skills at a level that made them eligible for remediation.

The conclusion of this section makes these summary observations: (1) using such data to define the problem of students at risk has led to the development of many discrete programs — each of which seeks to address a particular condition or behavior that puts students at risk; (2) such an approach runs the risk of addressing symptoms, not underlying causes; and (3) such an approach, to the extent it involves schools, tends to fragment further the already complex program of schools. It suggests that it may be more productive for schools to define the problem from the perspective of some of the Twelve Goals of Quality Education — namely, Self-Esteem, Citizenship, Family Living, Health, and Work. Such a definition focuses school staff attention on tasks that they already have: how to ensure that all students acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits associated with these goals.

Schools Can Make A Difference: Perspectives from Current Research

The second section reviews four lines of research that suggest that schools can be more successful with more students — particularly, students described as "at risk". The first line of research is determining that some teachers, classrooms, and schools have more positive effects than others on their students' attitudes, social behavior, and achievement. This research is identifying characteristics of teachers, classrooms, and schools that might explain why there are differences in effects.

The second line of research is examining the longitudinal effects of early schooling on children who come from families of low socio-economic status. These studies suggest that such students can achieve in school if they: (1) acquire, through a high quality pre-school program, the task orientation, self-confidence, social skills, and school-relevant knowledge needed to succeed in elementary school; (2) continue to develop and experience success with their elementary teachers; and (3) throughout these years, receive support from their family — support that has been encouraged and structured by school/parent/family involvement programs.

The third line of research is examining the effects of alternative education programs for secondary school students who exhibit behaviors that, if continued, will prevent them from acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to become successful adults. These studies suggest that alternative programs can help some students both to modify their behavior in positive ways and to learn how to be successful students. Such programs are designed to help students develop positive social bonds to school staff, activities, goals, and norms. To foster the development of such bonds, these programs are small in size, have staff willing to play an extended role, deliberately gain the support of the peer group, use a variety of individualized and cooperative learning strategies, and structure the curriculum, at least for part of the time, around real world problems and activities.

The last line of research is determining that schools can improve their effectiveness with students at risk. This research suggests that such improvement efforts need significant support from district leadership, must be grounded in a shared belief that schools can make a difference, and led by school-based person(s) that can communicate and develop staff commitment to a vision of what would be more effective practice. This research has identified the tendency of school improvement projects to focus on schoolwide problems (e.g., discipline, climate) and to avoid issues related to how teachers and students work together in and outside the classroom. Yet, it has also determined that for there to be significant change in student attitudes, behavior, and achievement, it is necessary to address those issues in ways that modify how teachers and students interact. This research also makes clear that though there are no easy-to-plan and easy-to-implement solutions to the problem of students at risk, increasing numbers of schools are beginning to address the problem more effectively.

Identification of Students and Educational Practices In Need of Attention

The third section provides an overview of the kinds of data that school staffs typically have at hand and can use to identify: (1) individual students in need of assistance, and (2) educational practices in need of improvement. Those data are attendance, behavior, and achievement information on each student that, in turn, can be expanded to include the results of in-depth evaluation of individual students.

The section describes systems that schools and districts have established or are developing to use this data to identify students in need of personalized attention (e.g., pre-kindergarten screening systems, use of behavioral checklists, analyzing student records using a dropout profile). It also describes systems that aggregate such individual data at classroom, grade, and school levels to identify where educational practice may need to be improved (e.g., computer-based systems for scoring and analyzing achievement data, and profiles for school improvement).

The section also describes four examples of instruments that can be used to obtain student perceptions (and, in some cases, teacher perceptions) that can provide additional information to help clarify what practices need to be improved. These instruments are Educational Quality Assessment, Quality of School Life, Effective Schools Battery, and Wisconsin Youth Survey.

Achieving Success With Students At Risk

The fourth section provides a framework for comparing approaches that schools are trying in order to become more successful with students at risk. The framework is organized into five sections.

- Scope of problem. The approach can define the problem as involving: (1) a small number of individual students, (2) specific groups of students, or (3) many students in a class, grade, or school.
- Strategies. The approach can assume that the problem resides within the individual, and therefore select, student-oriented interventions. The approach can assume that the problem resides in the student's environment (home, school, and/or community), and therefore, select environmental-oriented interventions. Or, the approach can assume the problem resides in both, in the interaction of an individual student with his/her particular environments, and therefore, select an intervention that seeks to affect directly both the individual and his/her environment.
- Objectives. The approach can focus on one or more of the following objectives, improve: (1) student perception of themselves, their teachers, and the school; (2) student commitment to conventional social goals, roles, norms, and activities; (3) student attendance; (4) student behavior; or (5) student achievement.
- Domains for action. The approach can result in change in one or more of the following domains: (1) curriculum; (2) instruction; (3) teacher expectations, behavior, and role; (4) incentives; (5) peer culture; (6) family support; (7) special services for students; and (8) school organization and structures.
- Outside resources. The approach can involve persons, agencies, and other outside resources — for example, law enforcement agencies, mental health agencies, health agencies, welfare agencies, community service agencies, youth groups, businesses and business-related groups, and churches.

This section then provides specific examples of some of the approaches that Pennsylvania schools and districts are trying (e.g., an early intervention program for the prevention of academic failure, a middle school program for alienated youth, an adolescent parenting program, and a neighborhood improvement and youth employment project).

Strategies for Planning

This section recommends that the problem of students at risk be considered in the context of Pennsylvania's Long-Range Planning process. It provides an overview of the "Program Development Evaluation Method" — a method that encourages school staff to determine the nature and scope of the problem, to identify or hypothesize possible causes of the problem, to develop objectives and design interventions based on those hypotheses, and to determine the data that needs to be collected to determine the full range of project effects.

This section also discusses obstacles frequently raised by school staff who are asked to consider whether they have a student-at-risk problem, and to take action, if they conclude that they do. These include:

- effects of family background and home conditions on students' attitudes towards school, early skill development, and achievement. School staff frequently need help refocusing their attention on variables over which they do have control — namely, conditions in school and classrooms that can affect student attitudes, behavior, and achievement.

- new standards with respect to skill and course requirements — standards that school staff can perceive as increasing the likelihood of student failure. School staff frequently need help refocusing their attention from curriculum issues that standards most directly affect, to instructional and climate issues over which they have considerable control.
- concern about the lack of resources — a constant concern for all schools. Though there are few new resources available for dealing with students at risk, with appropriate assistance school staff can find ways of more effectively using: (1) the knowledge and skills that reside within any staff, (2) students as a resource for helping students, (3) family members, (4) community volunteers, and (5) community organizations.
- the structure of schools that constrain the options that school staff consider. School staff need to confront this obstacle directly and be prepared to make the changes in structures that are required for them to successfully implement and institutionalize practices that have been shown to be more effective with students at risk.

Using this Resource Book

This resource book provides information that state and local leaders, concerned about the problem of students at risk, will find most useful in three contexts. First, they can use the information to broaden the current perspectives that they personally have about the problem. Specifically, this resource book suggests that:

- the problem should not just be defined in terms of how to reduce the incidences of specific behaviors that put students at risk, but also in relation to the goals of a quality education and how they might be achieved by more students
- several lines of research can be used both to inspire renewed effort on behalf of students at risk and to suggest practices and structures that may help students at risk achieve the goals of a quality education
- data are available in schools both to help define the nature and scope of the problem for a given school and to suggest what students and what educational practices may need attention
- there are many approaches to becoming more effective with students at risk, and they are being tried in Pennsylvania schools and districts
- there are some useful suggestions in current literature on how to plan and implement more effective practices.

Second, information can be drawn from the resource book to stimulate local discussion of the problem (Section I) and of possible ways of addressing the problem (Sections II, III, and IV). This information can be condensed on transparencies, used in presentations, or duplicated as hand-outs for discussion groups.

Third, information can be drawn from the resource book to help staff initiate a planning effort. Section V provides general process suggestions, Section III suggests data that can be collected and analyzed, and Section IV provides, in addition to specific examples of approaches being tried, a framework for comparing approaches.

A Final Word

The Pennsylvania Department of Education will be using this resource book in all of the ways described above. It is also interested in using this resource book to encourage the exchange of information and ideas among state and local leaders concerned with the problem of students at risk. To this end, it will keep a record of persons requesting this resource book and will invite them to provide feedback on its content and to share descriptions of how they used information found in it. If the feedback merits it, the Department, with the help of Research for Better Schools, will prepare supplements or perhaps a revised version. To initiate this process, a feedback form is provided at the very end of the resource book. All of these activities will be coordinated by the Department's Bureau of Basic Education Support Services. Communications about these matters should be addressed to:

Director
Bureau of Basic Education Support Services (5th Floor)
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Recent Reports on the Problem of Students At Risk

Education Commission of the States, Business Advisory Commission. (1985). *Reconnecting Youth.* Denver: Author.

Feistritzer, C.E. (1985). *Cheating our children: Why we need school reform.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Information.

Hodgkinson, H.C. (1985). *All one system: Demographics of education, kindergarten through graduate school.* Washington, DC: The Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc.

Levin, H.M. (1986). *Educational reform for disadvantaged students: An emerging crisis.* Washington, DC: National Education Association.

National Coalition of Advocates for Students. (1985). *Barriers to excellence: Our children at risk.* Boston: Author.

National Governors' Association, Center for Policy Research and Analysis. (1986). *Time for results: The Governors' 1991 report on education.* Washington, DC: Author.

McNett, I. (1983). *Demographic imperatives for education policy.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

National Foundation for the Improvement of Education. (1986). *A blueprint for success: Principles for dropout prevention.* Washington, DC: Author.

The Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc. (1986). *School dropouts: Everybody's problem.* Washington, DC: Author.

The States' excellence in education commissions: Who's looking out for at-risk youth. (1985). Report prepared for the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Chapel Hill, NC: MDC.

SECTION I

THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

This section provides the educator, interested in leading a discussion of the nature and scope of the "students at risk" problem, with eight sets of data that reflect the alternative ways students at risk are being defined (see Overview):

- the family background of students entering school
- students not engaging in school activities, both academic and co-curricular
- students using drugs and alcohol
- students committing disruptive and delinquent acts
- students becoming pregnant and having to care for a child
- students dropping out of school
- students attempting or committing suicide
- students not acquiring the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become successful adults.

The section concludes with a suggestion of how the problem of students being at risk might be recast to make it central to the mission of school.

Demographic Trends: The Changing Background of Students Entering the Public Schools

Hodgkinson (1985) and Feistritzer (1985), in separate reports, analyzed a compilation of national data. These analyses identified trends like the following

Population Changes

- Between 1980 and 1983, there has been a 5.4% increase in children under 5 years of age, and this increase is continuing.
- The composition of the under 5 age group is changing, given different birth rates in different groups. Between 1970 and 1982, the number of whites under five decreased 2.7%, while the number of blacks increased 11.6%. If current trends continue, around the year 2000 one in three Americans will be a minority.
- By 2020, most of the Baby Boom generation will have retired; it will be supported by a much smaller age group than currently supports retired persons.

Family Status

- In 1985, only 7% of American households consisted of a working father, a mother as homemaker and two or more school age children. In 1955, 60% of the households conformed to this pattern.
- In 1983, one in five children under 18 years of age lived with a female head of household.
- In 1983, one in five women heading a one-parent household had never been married.

Poverty

- The number of children living in poverty, after declining during the 1960's to a low of 14%, has been increasing sharply since 1979 (see Figure I-1).
- About one in four American children lives in poverty. A black child is about three times more likely than a white child to be born into poverty; a Hispanic child is more than twice as likely to be born into poverty (see Table I-1).

Hodgkinson concluded from his analysis of these demographic trends that over the coming decade, educators will likely face more children who:

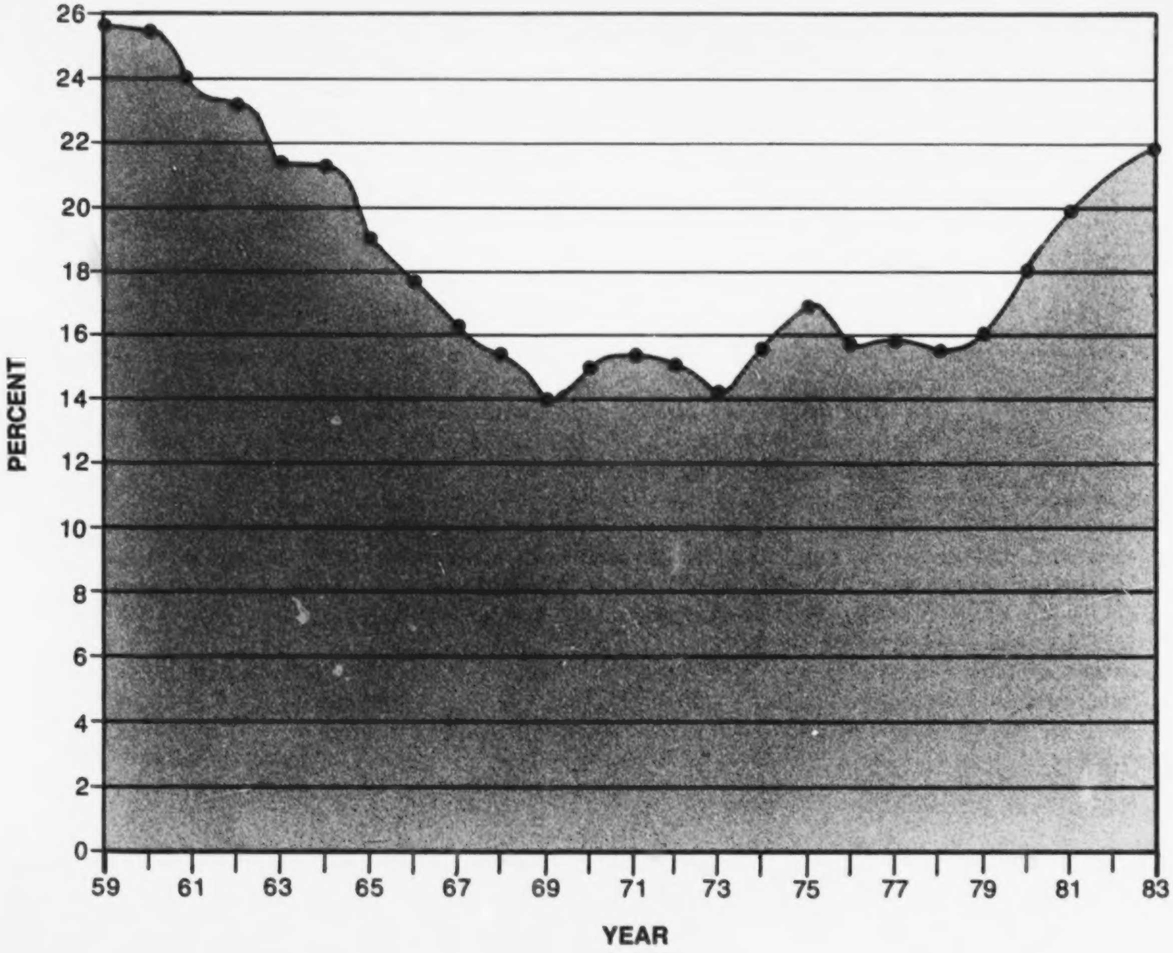
- were premature at birth
- were born to a teenage mother
- were born to parents who were not married
- come from single parent households
- come from "blended families" that result from remarriage of one original parent
- come from poor households
- are minorities
- have not participated in Head Start or similar preschool programs
- have working parents and could be described as latch-key children.

Numerous studies have shown a relationship between students who have one or more of these characteristics and low performance in school (e.g., *High School and Beyond Study,* 1982). This population has been called the "disadvantaged," the "underclass" (Levine, 1986), the educational Third World (E. Boyer, 1986, speech). Levine suggests that this population's existence and potential growth over the next decade may have such significant consequences for the American society as:

- reducing its economic competitiveness
- increasing the amount and proportion of public funds being allocated to human services
- leading to the emergence of a dual society with a large, poorly educated underclass.

Figure I-1

Poverty Rate Among Children, Ages 0-17



NOTE: Rates slightly underestimated because of exclusion of older unrelated children and, since 1979, unrelated subfamilies. Rates before 1966 adjusted downward for consistency with later years. (Poverty Among Children, Congressional Budget Office, December 3, 1984).

Hodgkinson, H.L. (1985). *All one system: Demographics of education, kindergarten through graduate school.* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc.

Table I-1

Children in Poverty: Percentages By Age and Race, 1983

Age	White	Black	Spanish Origin
Total, all ages	12.1	35.7	28.4
Under 15 years	18.1	47.6	39.0
15 to 17 years	13.9	42.6	34.0
18 to 21 years	13.7	39.6	28.0

U.S. Bureau of Census. (1983). *Statistical abstracts of the United States: 1985 (105th edition).* Washington, DC: Author.

Not Engaging in Classroom or School Activities

Data about students' non-engagement in school is hard to find, but educators experience such students every day. They are the large number of students who do not participate actively in any aspect of school life. They sit in the back of classrooms; they do not pay attention, participate in discussions, or complete assignments. And, they do not participate in school activities outside of class: athletics, music groups, clubs, community service groups, student government, student newspaper, and so forth. At best, they come to school to socialize.

Teachers are increasingly reporting student non-engagement to be their number one problem at the secondary level. For example, secondary school teachers from the 38 school districts participating in Goodlad's "study of schooling" (Goodlad, 1984) ranked highest the problems of lack of student interest, lack of parent interest, and student misbehavior. On the Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher (reported by U.S. Department of Education, 1985), 66% of the teachers viewed students' lack of interest as a very serious or somewhat serious problem; the problem of next greatest concern (63%) was inadequate finances. Teachers' responses in 1986 to the item in Pennsylvania's Educational Quality Assessment (EQA) that asks for their perception of student interest in learning is summarized in Table I-2. Teachers' agreement with the statement,

Table I-2

Teacher Perception of Student Interest in Learning Pennsylvania EQA Data - 1985*

Item: "Students in this school are interested in learning."	Grade 4[1]	Grade 6[2]	Grade 7[3]	Grades 9-11[4]
Strongly Agree	11%	8%	4%	3%
Mostly Agree	64%	58%	45%	41%
Neither	17%	21%	28%	31%
Mostly Disagree	7%	11%	20%	21%
Strongly Disagree	1%	2%	4%	4%

1. Summarizes teacher responses:	K-4
2. Summarizes teacher responses:	K-6, 5-6, 6
3. Summarizes teacher responses:	6-7, 7
4. Summarizes teacher responses:	7-9, 9-11, 7-11

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*Division of Educational Testing and Evaluation. (1985). *Educational quality assessment.* Harrisburg, PA: Author.

"Students in this school are interested in learning," steadily declines from elementary school through high school. Sizer (1986), in describing the common concerns of the Coalition of Essential Schools, co-sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Independent Schools, says,

> *"Some teachers believe that too many of their students are too little engaged in their schooling — not learning with the excitement, imagination, and vigor that the school staffs believe is possible. Some youngsters — especially those in the academic "middle," the unspecial ones — are lost in the busy shuffle of schooling." (p. 39)*

Besides teachers' perceptions, student self-reports of their feelings, attitudes, and activities can be used to indicate the prevalance of student non-engagement. For example, Table I-3 lists some of the items from Educational Quality Assessment that can be used for this purpose. These items come specifically from three sections: Self-Concept in School, Work Opportunities and Attitudes, and Student Condition Variables. Table I-3 also summarizes for the state the responses of 11th grade students whose districts participated in EQA in the spring of 1984.* These data suggest that a significant number of 11th graders are expressing attitudes and self-perceptions that would not be expected of successfully engaged students. For example:

- 46 percent agree, "I often become discouraged in school"
- 37 percent agree, "I feel unhappy about my school work"
- 28 percent judge their study habits to be fair to poor.

Several items suggest that at least 10% to 11% of the participating 11th grade students are involved in outside activities (e.g., television watching and outside employment) to such an extent that their involvement in school activities would be significantly constrained. These data are suggestive of statewide trends; much more useful are the data from which they are derived: the responses of students from each school participating in EQA.

Using Drugs and Alcohol

Data on the nature and scope of drug and alcohol use is based on surveys of youth and on reports from agencies that treat youth with drug related problems.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) recently published the results of its national survey (1985) of a random sample of 2,400 high school seniors from 1975 to 1985. The report reveals the following trends (see Figure I-2).

- The steady decline over the past four years (1980-1984) in illicit drug use, including marijuana, among high school seniors appears to have halted.
- Concurrently, high school seniors are reporting an increased use of cocaine: from 4.9% in 1983 to 5.8% in 1984 to 6.7% in 1985. Seventeen percent of responding seniors reported that they had tried this drug.

The NIDA report also reveals a change in attitude among seniors. When asked for reasons for quitting, or abstaining from using marijuana, the two groups of seniors increasingly have cited concern about psychological and physical damage (e.g., in 1976 just over 30% of those quitting cited these reasons; in 1983, approximately 60% cited them). The report also notes that since 1980, the monthly use of alcohol among seniors has declined from 72% in 1980 to 66% in 1985. However, 5% of the seniors report that they drink alcohol daily, and 37% report that they had five or more drinks in a row, at least once in the prior two weeks.

In 1984, the Pennsylvania Department of Education sponsored a survey (Data Base, 1985) of 10,683 high school students from ten Pennsylvania school districts, not including the cities of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Table I-4 compares the alcohol usage patterns reported by the national random sample of high school seniors from the ten Pennsylvania districts. The Pennsylvania seniors report consistently lower usage. One explanation of this difference may be in the way the two samples were drawn.

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*Only a portion of Pennsylvania districts participated in EQA in 1986; not included were the districts of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Table I-3

Summary of 11th Grade Student Response to Selected Items from 1986 Administration of Educational Quality Assessment*

Self-Concept in School Items	**Agree** (Strongly/Mostly)	**Disagree** (Strongly/Mostly)
I often become discouraged in school	46%	54%
I feel unhappy about my schoolwork	37%	63%
My teachers sometimes make me feel that I am "not good enough"	30%	70%
I have a low opinion of my learning ability	25%	75%
I am usually one of the last persons chosen for a group activity	25%	75%
I feel that my classmates do not consider me to be important	24%	76%
I often need someone to help me do my school-work	23%	77%
When I do well in school, it is often a matter of luck	21%	79%
I am the sort of person who can't do anything in school really well	19%	81%
I am proud of my school work	77%	24%
I am able to do many things well in school	85%	15%
I feel accepted by most of my teachers	86%	13%
Interest in School Items		
I feel I am learning a lot in my courses	80%	20%
I think this school has prepared me to make better decisions about life's problems	68%	32%
Many of my school assignments are a waste of time	33%	68%
Work Attitudes Items		
I'm known as a good worker	86%	14%
I believe in working only as hard as I have to	33%	68%

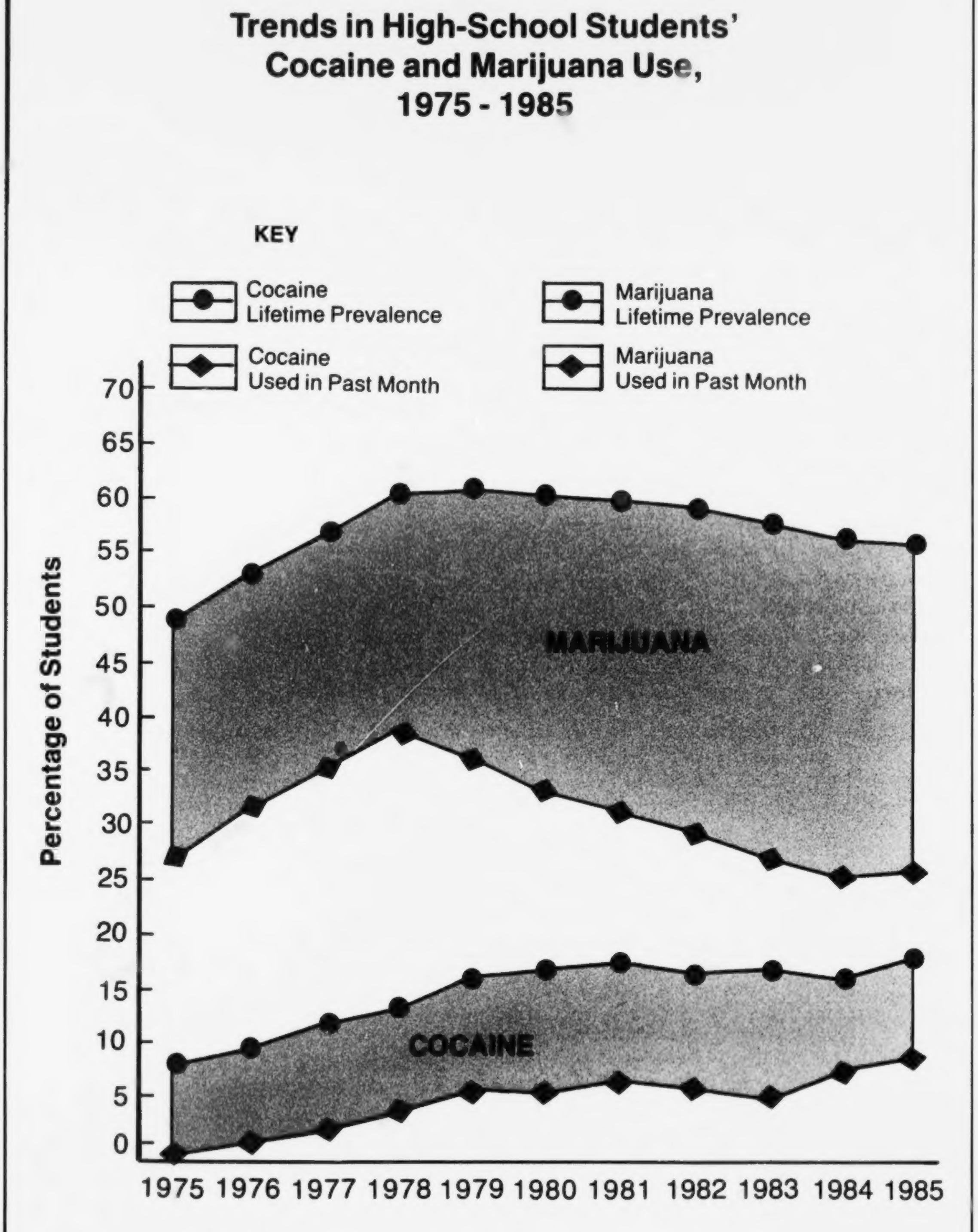
Study Habits	**Excellent To Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Fair to Poor**
My study habits are	36%	36%	28%

TV Watching Per Week Day	**About ½ hr.**	**About 3-4 hrs.**	**About 5 or more hrs.**
From the time you get home from school until you go to bed, how much time do you spend watching television?	55%	34%	11%

Hours of Employment Per Week	**None to Less than 8 hrs.**	**8 to 18 hrs.**	**More than 18 hrs.**
How many hours each week do you work to earn money?	65%	25%	10%

Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Educational Testing and Evaluation. (1986). *Educational Quality Assessment.* Harrisburg, PA: Author.

Figure I-2



Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse

Table I-4

A Comparison of 1985 High School Seniors Drug and Alcohol Use: National and Pennsylvania*

	Never Used		Used in the Past Month	
	National	Pennsylvania	National	Pennsylvania
Alcohol	7.8%	29%	65.9%	22%
Marijuana	45.8%	64%	14.9%	7%
Stimulants	73.8%	78%	9%	3%
Cocaine	82.7%	91%	6.7%	2%

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*National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1985 and the 1984-85 Pennsylvania State Report.

Note: Pennsylvania data is based on a sample of 10,000 students from a non-representative sample of 10 high schools. The data used in this table comes from 2,276 seniors from these 10 schools.

The Pennsylvania survey, besides asking about drug and alcohol use, also asked about students' school performance, in-school behavior, and over all life style. The survey report identified the following relationships:

- students who report spending more time on academic activities, also report using less drugs and alcohol
- students who report having lower grade point averages, also report using more cigarettes, beer, marijuana, stimulants, depressants, and cocaine
- students who place less importance on fair, consistent, and strict school policies, also report using more drugs and alcohol
- students who report using drugs and alcohol, tend also to report engaging in theft and vandalism
- students who report being heavy users of cigarettes, beer, and marijuana also report dissatisfaction, with school and their teachers and that they have less self-confidence (Data Base, 1985).

The Pennsylvania Department of Health, Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs, maintains records of youths treated for substance abuse. Their *Drug and Alcohol Treatment Trend Report* (1985) states that 6,486 youths, ages 15 to 19, were admitted to Pennsylvania treatment facilities for drug or alcohol abuse. Alcohol (40%) and marijuana (34%) abuse were the primary reasons for admissions (see Table I-5).

Table I-5

Reasons for Admission to Pennsylvania Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centers for Youth, 15-19 Years Old 1984-85

Substance	Number of Admissions	Percent
Alcohol	2588	40%
Marijuana	2176	34%
Amphetamines	755	12%
Opiates	89	1%
Barbiturates	53	1%
Other	577	9%
None	248	4%

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*Pennsylvania Department of Health, Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs. (1985), *Drug and alcohol treatment trend report.* Harrisburg, PA: Author.

The public's concern about adolescents' use of drugs and alcohol has grown in recent years. A 1984 opinion poll sponsored by the State Board of Education and conducted by the Gallup Organization indicated that 63% of the public believe that the use of alcohol and drugs by young people is a serious problem in their community *(The Evening News,* May 11, 1984). According to a more recent Gallup poll *(Phi Delta Kappan,* 1986) for the first time in 13 years, concern about drug abuse has been ranked as the number one school-related problem.

Committing Disruptive and Delinquent Acts

Data collected from 10,000 law enforcement agencies by the Federal Bureau of Investigation indicate that in 1983 youths under 18 years of age accounted for approximately 16.8% of all arrests and 30.5% of all "serious crime" arrests. More specifically, they accounted for:

- 43.8% of the vandalism arrests
- 37.5% of the arson arrests
- 38.3% of the burglary (home/business) arrests
- 34.6% of the motor vehicle thefts
- 32.3% of the larceny (shoplifting) arrests
- 26.3% of the robbery (against a person) arrests.

Sixty-five percent of these youths were between the ages of 15 and 17; 25% between 12 and 14 *(Crime in the United States,* 1983). National trends in juvenile arrests are summarized in Table I-6. It suggests that the percent of 14 to 17 year olds arrested annually from 1975 to 1983 has fluctuated very little, averaging about 14.2% over this 8-year period.

Table I-6

National Data
Arrests of Persons Under 18

	1975	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Total number of people in millions served by crime agencies reporting.*	179	198	207	205	208	214	187	201
Proportion of the total population (in line one) that are 14-17 year olds (in millions).**	14.2	15.3	15.7	15.1	14.6	14.5	12.1	12.4
Number of persons under 18 arrested (in millions).**	2.078	2.170	2.143	2.143	2.026	2.036	2.805	1.726
Percentage of persons under 18 arrested of the extrapolated total of 14-17 year olds. (line two)	14.6%	14.5%	14.2%	14.2%	13.9%	12.7%	14.9%	13.9%

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*Federal Bureau of Investigation. (1983). *Crime in the United States.* Washington, DC: Author.

**Extrapolated data from: Bureau of the Census. (1984). *Statistical abstracts of the United States: 1985 (105th edition).* Washington, DC: Author.

In comparison, *The Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report* (1985) states that youths under 18 accounted for 27.7% of all arrests and 35% of all serious crime arrests. More specifically, it says that youth accounted for 53% of the vandalism arrests, 34% of the serious property crime arrests, and 32% of the violent crime arrests. The report states that juvenile arrests peaked in 1981 with 142,883 arrests and has since dropped to 109,514 arrests in 1985. A similar trend is seen in juvenile dispositions (referrals disposed of by probation officers) from 1980 to 1985 (see Table I-7).

Table I-7

Pennsylvania Data
Delinquency Dispositions*
1980-1985

						Percent Change	
	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	80-85	84-85
Philadelphia	11,765	13,182	11,365	9,183	8,890	-24.4%	21.8%
Allegheny	5,651	5,294	4,462	3,899	4,189	-25.9%	5.7%
State minus Philadelphia & Allegheny	17,822	17,865	16,039	15,617	16,058	- 9.9%	-11.3%
State Total	**35,238**	**36,341**	**31,866**	**28,699**	**29,137**	**-17.3%**	**13.4%**

*Disposition: A case disposed of by a juvenile court and/or probation department.

Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, Juvenile Statistics Division. (1985). *Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Dispositions.* Harrisburg, PA: Author.

Wolfgang conducted two major studies of delinquent behavior in two birth cohorts. The first cohort was comprised of approximately 10,000 boys, born in 1945, who resided in Philadelphia, from their 10th to their 18th birthday. The second cohort was born in 1958, resided in Philadelphia and was made up of 13,160 boys and 14,000 girls. Both cohorts had slightly more than half its members from a high SES background, and slightly under half from low SES. The two cohorts were involved with the police in a similar manner. Approximately one-third of each group had at least one contact with the police before reaching their 18th birthday. Using the 1958 cohort data, youth involved with the police were more apt to be male (two-and-one-half times more likely), from unstable homes, have fewer years of schooling, and have records of lower scholastic achievement (Tracey, Wolfgang, & Figlio, 1985).

In the study of the first cohort, Wolfgang identified 627 male youth who were less than 7% of the cohort, but who had been arrested five or more times and were responsible for 70% of the juvenile crimes committed by the cohort. Similarly, a group in the second cohort, representing 7.5%, were arrested five or more times and responsible for 61% of the juvenile crimes that the cohort committed. Wolfgang describes these groups as chronic offenders. The study discovers that many of these offenders had started committing delinquent acts between ages 7 and 9. The major difference between the two groups of chronic offenders was that the second was much more violent, committing double the amount of rape and aggravated assault, triple the amount of murder, and five times the amount of robbery.

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (1985) reports that there were 29,137 juvenile dispositions in 1985. Their analysis of these dispositions provides some general information about these youth. Of the 54% for whom there is descriptive data, 37% live in households in which parents are married, 37% in divorced households, 8% in separated households, and 7% in which one parent is deceased. Of the 47% of youth for whom there is descriptive data, 64% report a family income below $16,000 per year; 34% of these report an income below $8,000 per year.

In a study of characteristics of youth who report that they engage in delinquent behavior, Gottfredson, Gottfredson, and Cook (1983) determined that such youth trend to:

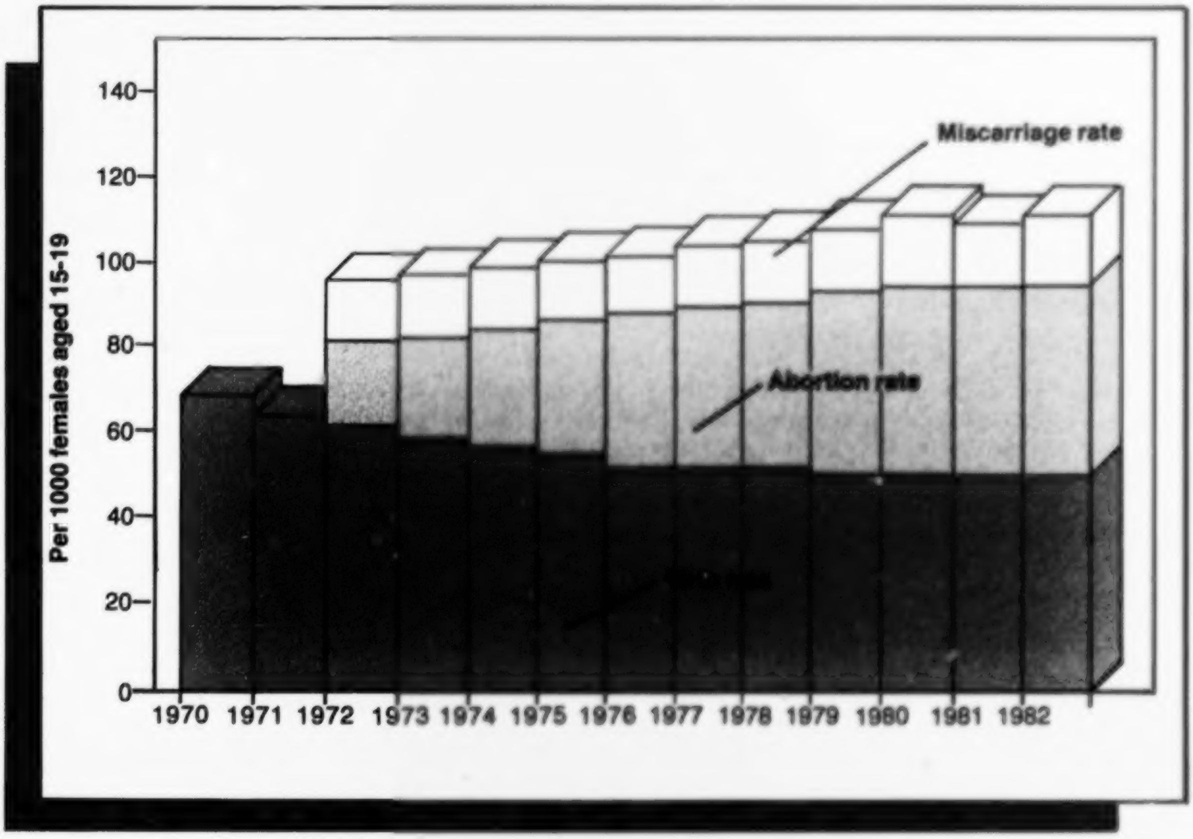
- have weak attachments to parents
- feel alienated from any social order and do not believe in the validity of rules or law
- dislike school and expend little effort on school work
- be truant
- associate with delinquent peers
- have low self-esteem or a delinquent self-concept.

Becoming Pregnant

The National Center for Health Statistics documents the growth of teen pregnancies over the last 12 years. Their data also documents a decline in the rate of live births and an increase in the rate of abortions, while the rate of miscarriages remains the same (see Figure I-3). The Pennsylvania State Health Data Center provides corresponding data for the state. From its data, the teenage pregnancy rate has been relatively stable for the five years between 1980 and 1984, as have been the rates of live births and abortions (see Table I-8).

Figure I-3

An Epidemic of Pregnancy: Teen-age Pregnancy Rate and Outcomes, 1970-1982



Source: Congressional Budget Office, from reports by the Alan Guttmacher Institute and the National Center for Health Statistics.

Table I-8

Pregnancy Statistics for Pennsylvania Between Ages 10 and 17

	1980 Number(Rate)*	1981 Number(Rate)	1982 Number(Rate)	1983 Number(Rate)	1984 Number(Rate)
Reported Pregnancies	16,051 (20.9)	15,268 (20.6)	14,627 (20.4)	13,760 (19.8)	13,496 (20.0)
Live Births	7,863 (10.2)	7,570 (10.2)	7,578 (10.6)	7,063 (10.2)	6,622 (9.8)
Induced Abortions	8,034 (10.5)	7,556 (10.2)	6,927 (9.7)	6,563 (9.4)	6,756 (10.0)

*Rates per 1000 women, ages 10 to 17. Omitted from this table are fetal deaths.

State Health Data Center. (1986). *Pennsylvania vital statistics annual report.* (1986). Harrisburg, PA: Department of Health.

The growth in teenage pregnancies relates to the growth in the proportion of teenage girls who had experienced intercourse. During the 1970's, this proportion increased by two-thirds. By 1979, close to one-half of all teenage girls were sexually active (Furstenberg, 1985). In 1980, Chilman reviewed research on factors associated with adolescent premarital intercourse (see Table I-9). For example, premarital intercourse has been related to peer pressure and sexually active friends, to urban settings, and to poverty. Premarital intercourse has also been related to low success in school and low educational expectations, to other at-risk behaviors like use of drugs and alcohol and engaging in disruptive acts, and to low self-esteem and feelings of alienation.

Teenage pregnancies directly affect schools in two ways. First, it is one of the major reasons for girls to drop out of school. From the *High School and Beyond* data (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986), 23% of the females dropping out of school between their sophomore and senior years cited pregnancy as the reason. The Pennsylvania Department of Education's report, *Dropouts from Pennsylvania Public Secondary Schools, 1984-85 School Year* (Laverty, 1985) reports that 819 girls over the compulsory attendance age left school, citing pregnancy or the need to care for her child; this is approximately 6% of the 7,112 females over the compulsory attendance age who dropped out of school that year.

Second, teenage pregnancies affect the next generation of school children. In a review of research on children of teenage parents, Baldwin and Cain (1980) note the well-established relationship between young maternal age and increased risk of low-birthweight babies and perinatal infant mortality. Other research documents the difficulty of many teenage mothers to provide their children a home environment that fosters cognitive, social, and emotional development. As a result, these children tend to require early intervention and special education services.

Dropping Out of School

A great variety of sources suggest the magnitude of the dropout problem.

- The National Center for Education Statistics compared the number of students graduating in a given year with the number of students enrolled in the 9th grade from four years earlier. It used the difference to calculate a dropout rate. Currently, it reports that approximately 28% of 9th graders fail to graduate (The Institute for Educational Leadership Inc., 1986).
- The U.S. Bureau of Census asked a sample of households to report the educational status of its members. It used this self-report data to estimate an 18% dropout rate.
- The ***High School and Beyond Study*** surveyed a sample of high school sophomores in 1980 and resurveyed them as seniors in 1982. Fourteen percent of the sophomores dropped out of school before the administration of the second survey (Ekstrom, et al., 1986).
- Pennsylvania is now collecting information from all school districts on the number of dropouts. Data collected thus far shows that approximately 23,130 students dropped out of school during 1984-85. This number is 2.7% of the 867,725 students enrolled in grades 7 to 12.

  The current Pennsylvania data allows comparisons similar to data reported by the National Center of Educational Statistics. For example, of the 163,976 students who were in 9th grade in 1980-81, 132,412 graduated in 1984. The difference of 31,564 is 19.2% of the 9th grade population (Laverty, 1985).

Table I-9

Summary Of Major Factors Apparently Associated With Adolescent Premarital Intercourse

Factor	Males	Females
Social situation and culture:		
Equal sex role norms	Probably	Yes
Permissive sex norms of the larger society	Yes	Yes
Racism and poverty	Yes	Yes
Rural-urban migration	Unknown	Yes
Father with less than a college education	Unknown	Yes, for blacks
Peer group pressure	Yes	Not clear
Lower social class membership	Yes (probably)	Yes?
Sexually permissive friends	Yes	Yes
Psychological:		
Use of drugs and alcohol	Yes	Yes
Low self-esteem	No?	Yes?
Desire for affection	No?	Yes?
Low educational goals and poor educational achievement	Yes	Yes
Attitudes of alienation	No?	Yes?
Deviant attitudes	Yes	Yes
Low religiosity	No	Yes
High social criticism	No?	Yes?
Strained parent-child relationships	Yes	Yes
Going steady, being in love	Yes	Yes
Risk-taking attitudes	Yes?	Yes?
Passivity dependence	No?	Yes?
Aggression, high activity	Yes?	No?
Biological:		
Early puberty	Yes	Yes?

Note: Variables followed by a question mark are supported by only one or two small studies. The other variables are supported by a number of investigations.

Chilman, C.S. (1980). *Adolescent sexuality in a changing American Society: Social and psychological perspectives.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Researchers have sought to identify background characteristics of students who drop out. A recent analysis of the *High School and Beyond Study* data compared characteristics of students staying in school and those dropping out of school. Some of the differences identified were as follows:

- Dropouts were disproportionately from low socio-economic families and from racial/ethnic minority groups (see Figure I-4).
- Dropouts tended to come from homes with a weaker educational support system (e.g., homes had fewer study aids; less opportunity for nonschool related learning; had mothers with lower levels of formal education, with lower educational expectations for their children, and who were more likely to be working; had parents who were less likely to be interested in or to monitor both in-school and out-of school activities).
- Dropouts as sophomores had lower school grades ("B's" versus "C's") and lower test scores, did less homework (2.2 in contrast to 3.4 hours per week), and reported more disciplinary problems (41% in contrast to 16%).
- Dropouts as sophomores reported less interest in school (79% of the "stayers" in contrast to 60% of the dropouts said "yes, they were interested in school").
- Dropouts as sophomores attended classes less regularly, were less likely to feel popular with other students, and were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Fewer dropouts as sophomores had plans to go to college (44% in contrast to 67%).
- Dropouts as sophomores were more likely to report spending time outside of school "driving around" and "going on dates."
- Dropouts as sophomores reported working more hours per week, receiving a high hourly wage, and finding their jobs more enjoyable and important than school.

Of the students who dropped out, 30% left during or before the end of their sophomore year, 44% during the eleventh grade, and 26% during the senior year (Ekstrom, et al., 1986).

In the *High School and Beyond Study,* students who dropped out were asked their reasons for leaving school. The main reasons, chosen by 10% or more of the dropouts, are shown in Table I-10. One-third of the dropouts (male and female) chose: "did not like school" and "received poor grades." Twenty-seven percent of the males chose "offered job and chose to work," while 31% of the females chose "getting married" and 23% chose "pregnancy." Examination of the mix of reasons for dropping out supports the Bickel et al., (1986) contention that some dropouts might be more accurately described as "pull outs," "push outs," or "fade outs" (Bickel, Bond, & LeMahieu, 1986).

Table I-10

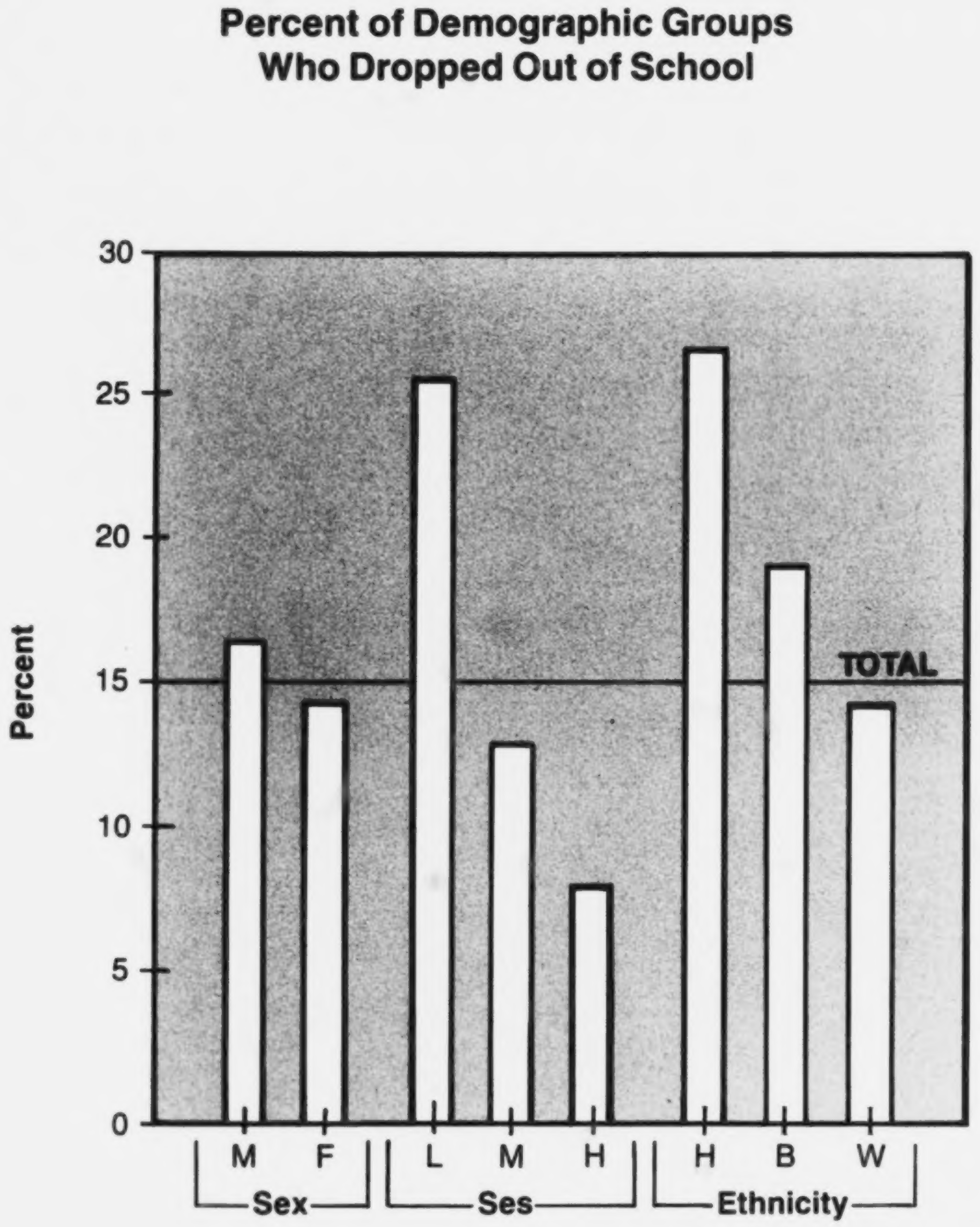
Major Reasons for Dropping Out of School

(Percent responding "Yes" to each item)

	Total	Males	Females
Did not like school	33%	35%	31%
Poor grades	33%	36%	30%
Offered job and chose to work	19%	27%	11%
Getting married	18%	7%	31%
Could not get along with teachers	15%	21%	9%
Had to help support family	11%	14%	8%
Pregnancy	11%	—	23%
Expelled or suspended	10%	13%	5%

Ekstrom, R.B., Goertz, M.E., Pollack, J.M., Rock, D.A. (1986). Who drops out of high school and why? Findings from a national study. *Teachers College Record, 87(3).*

Figure I-4

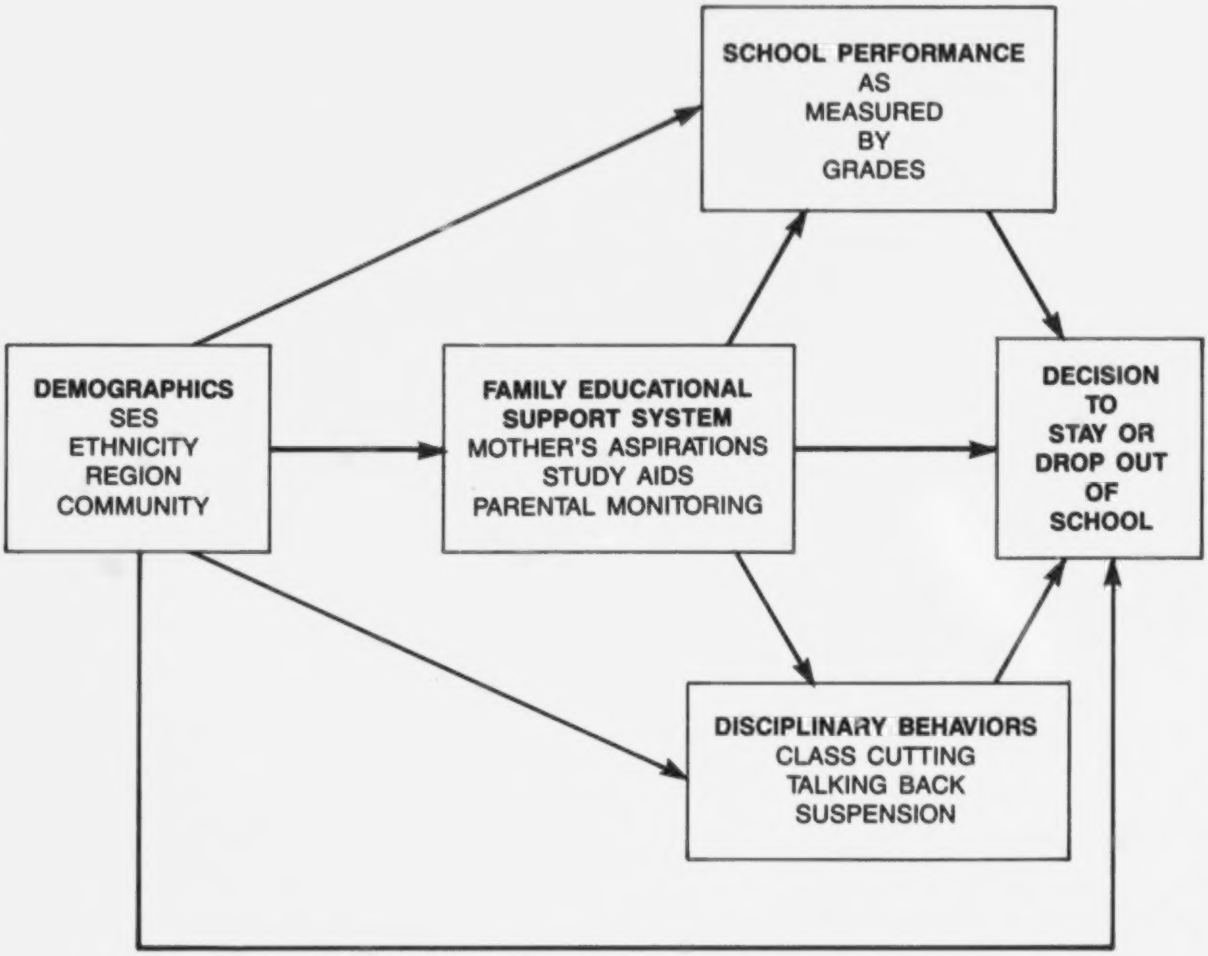


Ekstrom, R.B., Goertz, M.E., Pollack, J.M., Rock, D.A. (1986). Who drops out of high school and why? Findings from a national study. *Teachers College Record*, 87(3), 356-373.

In order to assess the explanatory power of the different variables, Ekstrom et al. (1986) developed a path model relating demographics, family educational support, behavioral performance in school, and the decision to stay or drop out of school (see Figure I-5). They did path analyses using data from the entire dropout population and from racial subgroups. The analyses determined that having behavior problems and low grades were the major determinants of dropouts. The same analyses showed several demographic characteristics and family variables to be related to behavior problems and low grades (e.g., males with low verbal ability and with a sense that they had little control over their lives, coming from educationally unsupportive homes).

Figure I-5

Path Model of the Decision to Stay In or Drop Out of School


SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
AS
MEASURED
BY
GRADES
DEMOGRAPHICS
SES
ETHNICITY
REGION
COMMUNITY
FAMILY EDUCATIONAL
SUPPORT SYSTEM
MOTHER'S ASPIRATIONS
STUDY AIDS
PARENTAL MONITORING
DECISION
TO
STAY OR
DROP OUT
OF
SCHOOL
DISCIPLINARY BEHAVIORS
CLASS CUTTING
TALKING BACK
SUSPENSION

Ekstrom, R.B., Goertz, M.E., Pollack, J.M., Rock, D.A. (1986). Who drops out of high school and why? Findings from a national study. *Teachers College Record*, 87(3).

The Pennsylvania Department of Education, in the summer of 1984, re-designed the system for reporting enrollments, attendance, and withdrawals in order to obtain more detailed information on school dropouts. To test the usefulness of the design, school districts were asked to submit data according to the new design. Because this was an after-the-fact request, districts were not able to produce all of the information requested. Nevertheless, the information was sufficient to test the design and conduct some analyses. The Department's Final Report (Laverty, 1985) indicates the following:

- Different racial categories have different dropout rates (percent of dropouts of total secondary enrollment): Hispanic, 8.8%; black, 6.1%; Native American, 4.4%; Asian/Pacific Islanders, 2.4%; and white, 2.0%.
- Most black and Hispanic dropouts are from urban areas. The 71 first and second class districts reported 95% of the Hispanic and 96% of the black dropouts.
- Percentage of dropouts varied by program: 64% in general or academic tracks, 25% in vocational or business programs, and 11% in special education programs.
- Most of dropouts over the compulsory school age had academic difficulties (82%). A smaller group had consistent disciplinary problems (9%). A still smaller group dropped out because of pregnancy or the need to care for a child (6%).

In general, these findings parallel the results of the *High School and Beyond Study* analysis.

Attempting Suicide

Data about youth suicide is derived from the following sources: health statistic centers (state and national), mental health treatment records, and psychological studies.

The National Institute on Health Statistics reports that in 1983, the suicide rate for 15-24 year olds was 11.9% for every 100,000. This rate is three times the youth suicide rate of 1955, and two times the 1960 rate. In 1960, suicide was the fifth leading cause of death for 15-24 year olds. Today, it is the third leading cause, trailing accidents and homicide. The incidence of adolescent suicide is estimated as being two times greater for whites than blacks; three to four times greater for males than females.

Statistics from Pennsylvania's State Health Data Center further suggest the scope of the problem. During the period of 1979 to 1983, the suicide rate for the 15-24 age group was 11.3% per 100,000; slightly lower than the 1983 national rate of 11.9%. The State Health Data Center's 1984 figures on youth 15-24 also reveal that 256 youths committed suicide during 1984, accounting for 10% of all deaths in this age group, and that suicide was the second leading cause of death after accidents.

The 1980 *Statistical Abstracts of the United States* reports that the United States has the fourth highest rate of suicide for the 15-24 age group among the industrialized nations. Austria, Germany, and Switzerland had higher suicide rates for this age group, while countries such as Japan, England, and France had much lower suicide rates.

These statistics do not describe the many attempted suicides. For example, a 1971 study of 1,100 self-poisonings in youth aged 1-18, found an incidence of 220 self-poisonings for every fatality (McIntire & Angle, 1971). Another study estimated 50 to 60 suicide attempts for each death (McIntire, Wickoff, & Schlicht, 1977).

Depression is a form of psychopathology that is most frequently in volved in the suicidal behavior of 15 to 19 year-olds (Smith, 1981). According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 15% of adolescents who suffer from major depression will die by suicide. Frederick Goodwin, director of the intramural research at the National Institute of Mental Health, estimates that of those youth who commit suicide every year, between 60% and 80% have some type of depressive disorder (article by Tugend, A., *Education Week*, June 18, 1986).

The reasons students take their lives are very complex. The recent Pennsylvania Department of Education publication, *Adolescent Suicide* (1986), cites the following factors:

- external stress (e.g. school achievement, fear of nuclear war, community violence)
- physical and psychological changes (e.g. stress associated with dating, sexuality, drugs and alcohol)
- breakdown of the family unit (e.g. increasing divorces, working parents, mobility and decreasing role models and support network)
- responsibilities and privileges (e.g. increased responsibility and privileges with too little adult guidance)
- inaccurate perception of death (e.g. the inaccurate portrayal of death in the movies, television, and music).

Students' Acquisition of Critical Knowledge and Skills and Their Success as Adults

This section has reviewed conditions and behaviors that put students at risk of not graduating from school and/or succeeding as adults. Yet, what can put students most at risk is what they fail to learn in school.

One set of data suggestive of this failure is student performance on basic skills achievement tests and exercises. The summary of Pennsylvania students' performances on the Test for Essential Learning and Literacy Skills (TELLS) in the spring of 1986 (see Table I-11), shows that 22.4% of the 3rd, 5th, and 8th grade regular students taking the reading test and 21.1% taking the mathematics test scored at levels low enough to be eligible for remediation.

Table I-11

Percentage of Regular Public School Students Eligible for Remediation Under the TELLS Program, Based on 1985-86 Statewide Test Results

	Reading	Mathematics
Grade 3	24.0% (25,085)	18.8% (19,510)
Grade 5	21.4% (21,878)	19.2% (19,639)
Grade 8	21.7% (25,246)	24.8% (28,807)
TOTAL	**22.4% (72,209)**	**21.1% (67,956)**

Pennsylvania Department of Education. (1986). *TELLS (Testing for essential learning and literacy skills): 1985-86 Statewide test results.* Harrisburg, PA: Author.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) provides some complementary data. NAEP has classified its mathematics exercises into four cognitive levels that correspond, in part, to exercise complexity and difficulty. Table I-12 summarizes the percentage of 9, 13 and 17 year-olds who were able to complete successfully in 1982 the exercises at each level.

Table I-12

Percentage of Success on Exercises Assessing Mathematical Knowledge, Skills, Understanding and Applications in 1982

Type of Exercises	9 year-olds	13 year-olds	17 year-olds
Knowledge	68.3%	73.8%	74.9%
Skills	50.6%	57.6%	60.0%
Understanding	41.2%	60.5%	61.5%
Application	39.6%	45.6%	42.4%
All Exercises	**56.4%**	**60.5%**	**60.3%**

*National Assessment of Educational Progress. (1983). *TELLS (Testing for essential learning and literacy skills): 1985-86 Statewide Test Results.* Harrisburg, PA: Author.

It shows, for example, that only 60% of the 13 and 17 year-olds were able to complete successfully the exercises at the "understanding" level, while only 42% to 45% of those age groups were able to complete the exercise at the "applications" level.

NAEP has classified its reading exercises into five levels of proficiency. Table I-13 summarizes the percentage of 9, 13, and 17-year olds able to complete successfully in 1984 the exercises at each level. It shows, for example, that 60.8% of 17 year olds were unable to complete exercises above the intermediate level. In the fall of 1986, NAEP released the results of its survey of literacy of young adults. According to early press releases, it shows that:

Table I-13

Percentage of Students At or Above Five Reading Proficiency Levels

(Based on 1984 NAEP Exercises)

Reading Proficiency Levels	9 year olds	13 year olds	17 year olds
Rudimentary: Readers who have acquired rudimentary reading skills and strategies can follow brief written directions. They can also select words, phrases, or sentences to describe a simple picture and can interpret simple written clues to identify a common object. Performance at this level suggests the ability to carry out simple, discrete reading skills.	93.9%	99.8%	100%
Basic: Readers who have learned basic comprehension skills and strategies can locate and identify facts from simple informational paragraphs, stories, and news articles. In addition, they can combine ideas and make inferences based on short, uncomplicated passages. Performance at this level suggests the ability to understand specific or sequentially related information.	64.2%	94.5%	98.6%
Intermediate: Readers with the ability to use intermediate skills and strategies can search for, locate, and organize the information they find in relatively lengthy passages and can recognize paraphrases of what they have read. They can also make inferences and reach generalizations about main ideas and author's purpose from passages dealing with literature, science and social studies. Performance at this level suggests the ability to search for specific information, interrelate ideas, and make generalizations.	18.1%	60.3%	83.6%
Adept: Readers with adept reading comprehension skills and strategies can understand complicated literary and informational passages, including material about topics they study at school. They can also analyze and integrate less familiar material and provide reactions to and explanations of the test as a whole. Performance at this level suggests the ability to find, understand, summarize, and explain relatively complicated information.	1.0%	11.3%	39.2%
Advanced: Readers who use advanced reading skills and strategies can extend and restructure the ideas presented in specialized and complex texts. Examples include scientific materials, literary essays, historical documents, and materials similar to those found in professional and technical working environments. They are also able to understand the links between ideas even when those links are not explicitly stated and to make appropriate generalizations even when the texts lack clear introductions or explanations. Performance at this level suggests the ability to synthesize and learn from specialized reading materials.	0.0%	0.3%	4.9%

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (1984). *The reading report card: Progress towards excellence in our schools. (Trends in reading over four national assessments, 1971-1984).* Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, pp. 15-16.

> *"While most young American adults can read well enough to accomplish day-to-day tasks, substantial numbers have difficulty comprehending what they have read, which signals trouble for a nation trying to compete in an increasingly technological world."*
> (Report on Educational Research, *October 8, 1986, pp. 1-2)*

In addition to information about students' test and exercise performance, there is information about what students do following high school. In 1984, the *High School and Beyond Study* undertook its second follow-up survey of 1980 sophomores and seniors. Initial analyses of their activities are just beginning to become available. One such analysis describes the percentage of 1980 high school sophomores involved in selected activities during a week in February 1984, and relates that percentage to their status in 1982, when they either graduated or failed to graduate from high school (see Table I-14). The analysis shows the different effects of being a graduate, an at-risk graduate (C or below grade average), and non-graduate on continuing education, both academic and vocation-related, serving in the military, and working either full or part-time. These differences are most dramatically reflected in the percentages of 1980 sophomores looking for work in February 1984: 8% of the graduates, 17% of the at-risk graduates, and 26% of the non-graduates.

Table 1-14

Percentages of 1980 High School Sophomores Involved in Specific Activities Four Years Later

(reported for one week in February 1984)

Reported Activity*	Total Population	Graduates** (63%)	At-Risk Graduates**(28%)	Non-Graduates** (10%)
Taking academic courses at 2-year, 4-year, graduate, or professional school	35%	48%	17%	1%
Taking vocational, technical, apprenticeship, or government training	9%	10%	10%	4%
Serving in the military	4%	4%	6%	2%
Working full or part-time	59%	58%	62%	52%
Looking for work	12%	8%	17%	26%
Keeping house	10%	7%	10%	26%
Other: temporary lag-off, break from school or work	9%	7%	10%	17%

*Respondents could check more than one response.

**Graduates are defined as students who graduated with a grade average of C+ or higher (based on school transcripts). At-risk graduates are defined as students with a grade average of C or below, who never the less graduated from school. Non-graduates are defined as 1980 sophomores who either dropped out of school between base-year survey in spring 1980 and first follow-up in spring of 1982, and had returned to school but had not yet graduated at the time of the second follow-up.

Hispanic Policy Development Project. (1986). *The Research Bulletin.* Washington, DC: Author, 1(1), p. 2.

Students At Risk and the Mission of Schools

This section reviewed eight sets of data about conditions or behaviors that are being used to define the problem of students at risk. This approach has led educational and governmental leaders to focus on specific conditions and behaviors, and develop targeted programs for each. To address the effects of early experience that may put a child at risk, the federal government initiated programs to identify handicapped and learning disabled youngsters, as early as possible, and to provide them with educational and related services; programs to provide children at risk a "Head Start;" and programs to provide intensive supplementary instruction to such children (Chapter 1, Follow-through). To these federal programs, Pennsylvania has added its own resources, both for special education and for remediation (TELLS).

To address specific behaviors that put children and youth at risk, both the federal government and Pennsylvania have initiated a variety of programs, frequently in cooperation with other agencies who are more directly concerned with certain of these behaviors.

- Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention. The Pennsylvania Department of Health funds the Department of Education to aid school districts with drug and alcohol abuse prevention programs, including the funding of the curriculum "Here's Looking at You, Two." In addition, there is the Students Assistance Program that trains and helps teams of school personnel to recognize and counsel youth with drug and alcohol problems.
- Pregnant and Parenting Youth Program. The interagency program (Pennsylvania Departments of Education, Labor and Industry, and Health) provides funds for local programs that will help pregnant teenagers and teenage parents remain in school and graduate, or that will provide them training in

specific job skills necessary to become employed. Those programs can also use local funds to provide support services such as day care, health care, and counseling.

- Dropout Prevention Programs. The Pennsylvania Department of Education uses funds from the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act to fund counseling, remedial instruction, support services, and entry-level job training programs — all aimed at dropout prevention or supporting students re-entry.

This strategy of developing and implementing specific programs and services to address particular conditions and selected behaviors that put students at risk is a direct response to the needs of significant numbers of children and youth. However, from the perspective of the mission of schools, these programs can be viewed as further fragmenting the already complex programs and services that schools provide, and as potentially diverting resources from the instructional program that is serving the basic educational needs of a majority of students. The question that needs to be asked is: "Is there a way of thinking about the conditions and behaviors that are putting students at risk that would allow educators to help in a manner more consistent with their mission?"

An Alternative Way of Defining the Problem

In Pennsylvania, the mission of schools is defined by the Twelve Goals of Quality Education (see Figure I-15) that, together, attempt to summarize for Pennsylvania schools the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that all students need to acquire to become successful adults. In examining the content of the Twelve Goals of Quality Education, it is the Department's conclusion that aspects of the problem of students at risk can be redefined in terms of several of those goals.

- The Goal of Self-Esteem is to develop every student's self-understanding and feeling of self-worth — particularly, in the context of being a student in school. The antithesis of this goal is to have students withdrawing psychologically from school life, cutting classes, becoming truant, and dropping out.
- The Goal of Citizenship is for every student to acquire the values and attitudes for responsible citizenship and to behave in socially responsible ways. The antithesis of this goal is to have students disrupting classes and school activities, and committing delinquent acts.
- The Goal of Family Living is for every student to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for successful personal and family living. The antithesis of this goal is to have students becoming pregnant.
- The Goal of Work is for every student to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become a self-supporting member of society. The antithesis of this goal is not being in class on time, not completing assignments in a high quality manner, and not earning the grades and credits required for graduation.
- The Goal of Health is for every student to acquire knowledge and develop practices necessary to maintain physical and emotional well-being. The antithesis of this goal is to have students using drugs and alcohol and attempting suicide.

In other words, a way to define the problem of at-riskness that brings it in line with the mission of schools is to ask: how can we, as educators, be more successful with more students with respect to the goals of self-esteem, citizenship, family living, health, and work. In the next section, we will explore several lines of research that together suggest that schools can achieve these goals.

Table I-15

Pennsylvania's Twelve Goals Of Quality Education

The constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania states, "The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth." This provision mandates a quality education for each child in the Commonwealth.

The schools have the primary responsibility for the achievement of the goals of quality education as established by the State Board of Education, but they must work in close and continuous cooperation with the family, community and other appropriate social, religious and governmental institutions to insure the highest possible achievement of goals.

To foster achievement of a quality education, the school environment should be safe, attractive and orderly, promote a willingness to work for objectives, stimulate a readiness to continue learning throughout life and encourage the fullest possible education development of each student.

To foster achievement of a quality education, the school program should reflect the following goals:

Communication Skills: Quality education should help every student acquire communication skills of understanding, speaking, reading and writing.

Mathematics: Quality education should help every student acquire skills in mathematics.

Self-Esteem: Quality education should help every student develop self-understanding and a feeling of self-worth.

Analytical Thinking: Quality education should help every student develop analytical thinking skills.

Understanding Others: Quality education should help every student acquire knowledge of different cultures and an appreciation of the worth of all people.

Citizenship: Quality education should help every student learn the history of the nation, understand its systems of government and economics and acquire the values and attitudes necessary for responsible citizenship.

Arts and the Humanities: Quality education should help every student acquire knowledge, understanding and appreciation of science and technology.

Work: Quality education should help every student acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become a self-supporting member of society.

Family Living: Quality education should help every student acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for successful personal and family living.

Health: Quality education should help every student acquire knowledge and develop practices necessary to maintain physical and emotional well-being.

Environment: Quality education should help every student acquire the knowledge and attitudes necessary to maintain the quality of life in a balanced environment.

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SECTION II

SCHOOLS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE: PERSPECTIVES FROM CURRENT RESEARCH

This section provides educators interested in stimulating local discussion of the problem of students at risk with a selective review of four lines of research that suggest schools *can be* more successful with students at risk. This research is exploring:

- why classrooms and schools that serve similar communities have different effects on the behavior and achievement of their students
- what the longitudinal effects of early childhood programs are on students at risk
- what the effects of alternative school programs are on students at risk
- whether schools can plan and implement changes that increase their success with students at risk.

Research on Students at Risk

There is a considerable amount of research that can be drawn upon to help one think about the problem of students at risk. In an extensive review of research related to youth "development and disorder," Michael Rutter (1980) uses the following framework for summarizing various lines of research on possible influences on youth development and behavior (Figure II-1).

The framework presents four clusters of influences. One cluster of influences is individual predispositions. Under this cluster, Rutter discussed:

- factors associated with heredity (e.g., physical features and capabilities, intelligence, and disabilities)
- family influences (e.g., quality of early care and nutrition, quality of communication, level of discord and disruption, parental behaviors, level and quality of supervision).

The second cluster of influences is ecological predispositions. Under this cluster, Rutter discussed:

- influences of social groups or peers (e.g., expectations, behavioral models)
- influence of school (e.g., success on school tasks, quality of relationships with teachers, opportunities to contribute to quality of school life)
- influence of community environment (e.g., level of employment, level of crime, mass media).

The third cluster of influence is current circumstances or events. Under this cluster, Rutter discussed stress events (e.g., loss of parent or sibling, family separation or divorce, parent loss of job and income, rejection by a friend, failure on an important task). And, the final cluster is opportunities available at a particular time (e.g., availability of drugs, unsupervised homes).

For educators, this framework suggests the full range of influences of which they need to be aware as they consider the problems of students at risk. The individual predispositions are the givens that educators have to work with, though some educators are attempting to affect these predispositions through their early childhood and parent/family involvement programs. The ecological predispositions include the ones of most concern to educators — namely, how to structure schools and classrooms to achieve their goals with all of their students. They also include peer and community influences that some educators are trying to affect by involving students in the principal tasks of the school and by building partnerships with other community agencies and programs. The opportunities cluster are frequently addressed only when community leaders, school staff, and/or parents are confronted by a specific problem behavior and are trying to identify ways of reducing its prevalence (e.g., reducing the availability of drugs in the school or community; increasing opportunity for students to engage in supervised activities after school). Finally, the current circumstances cluster includes both events over which educators have no influence, but which can affect student behavior in school (e.g., break-up of a family); and events that occur because of school-based decisions and actions (e.g., decisions to suspend, expell, fail, or have a student repeat a grade).

This section does not attempt to review research in all of these clusters. Instead, it focuses on the subset of influence over which educators have the most direct control: the ecology of the school, the structures, processes, and staff behaviors that influence what individual students experience and achieve in school.

The Different Effects that Classrooms and Schools Can Have on Student Attitude, Behavior, and Achievement

Educational researchers have devoted significant energy over the past 16 years to exploring why classrooms and schools have different effects on student attitudes, behavior, and achievement.

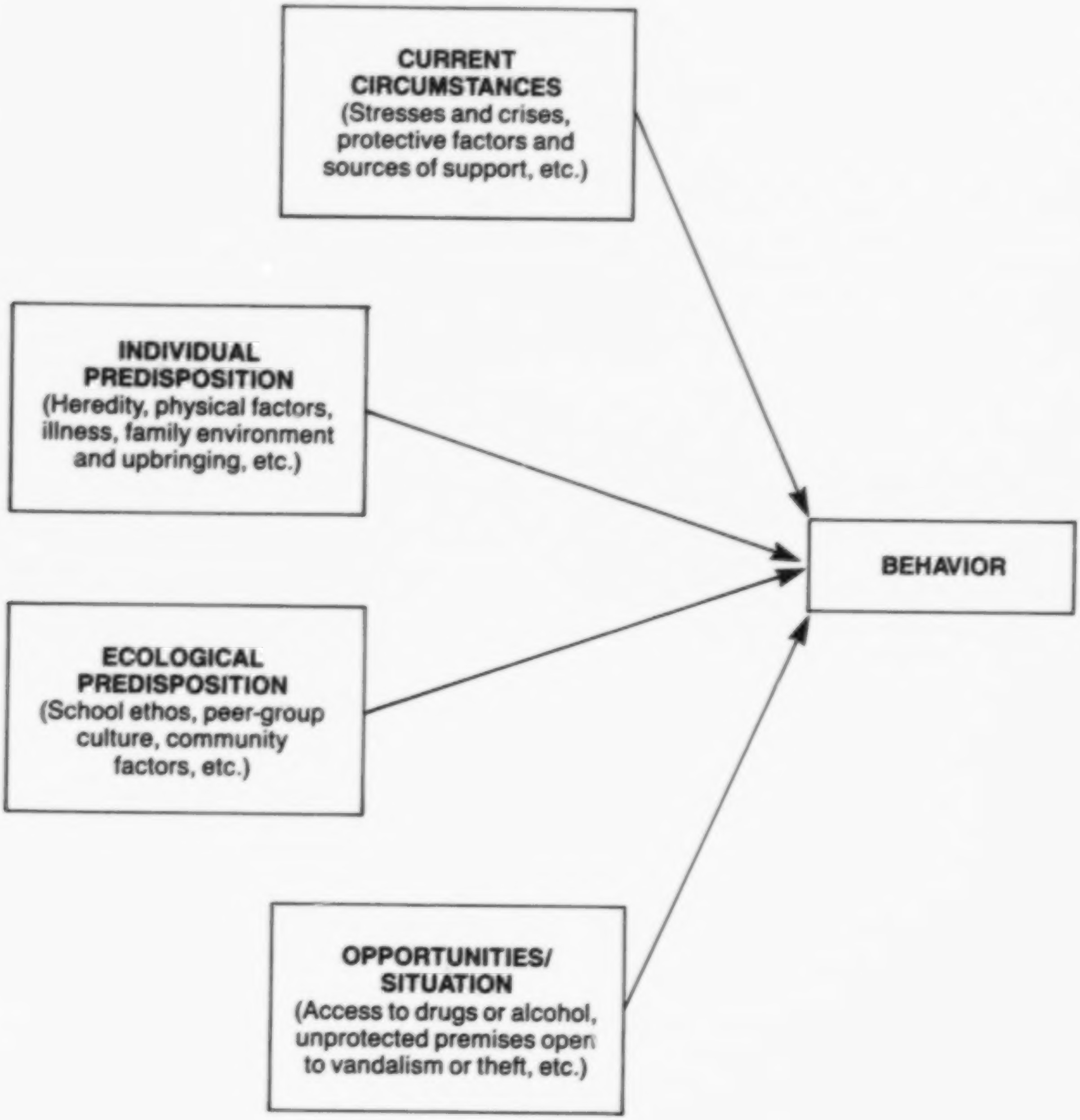
Effective Teaching and Classroom Research

One line of research used the classroom as the unit of analysis. It has employed the full range of research methodologies, including:

- case studies of classrooms and teachers to generate possible hypotheses
- correlational studies to test the strength of the relationship between selected input and process variables, and selected outcome measures
- experimental studies that compare the effects of a current practice that has been modified in ways that reflect the results of correlational research.

Figure II-1

Simplified Model of Causative Influences


CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES
(Stresses and crises, protective factors and sources of support, etc.)
INDIVIDUAL PREDISPOSITION
(Heredity, physical factors, illness, family environment and upbringing, etc.)
ECOLOGICAL PREDISPOSITION
(School ethos, peer-group culture, community factors, etc.)
OPPORTUNITIES/ SITUATION
(Access to drugs or alcohol, unprotected premises open to vandalism or theft, etc.)
BEHAVIOR

(Rutter M., 1980, p. 240)

This research has identified teaching behaviors that are more effective with groups of students (see Brophy and Good, 1986 for a comprehensive review of this research).

This research has also provided school staff with useful indicators of year-end achievement — particularly, as measured by standardized basic skills achievement tests. These indicators include:

- the time allocated for instruction on a subject
- the time that students are actively engaged in appropriate learning tasks, given students' prior learning and how their learning will be assessed
- the level of success that the students experience daily on those learning tasks.

One study has referred to this set of indicators as "academic learning time" (Fisher, Berliner, Filby, Marliave, Cahen, & Dishaw, 1980).

Developmental projects have provided evidence that school staff can improve class and school performance on year-end basic skills achievement tests, if they:

- relate instruction to student's prior learning
- provide students the opportunity to learn the content on which they will be tested
- engage students in learning that content
- increase the level of success that students experience in their daily work and the level of mastery that they demonstrate at the end of the units of work.

Though numerous suggestions on how school staff can address these tasks are appearing in both the educational research and the professional literature, project experience has suggested that school staff must decide which ones best fit their teaching styles and their classroom/school context (Helms, Graeber, & Beyer, 1985).

Effective Schools Research

The other line of research used the school as the unit of analysis. To date, it has predominantly studied schools in urban areas or schools with significant numbers of students from low SES families (e.g., Edmonds & Frederiksen, 1979; Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimer, Ouston, & Smith 1979; Clark, Lotto, & McCarthy, 1980).

This research has compared schools with similar populations which differed significantly on one or more of these measures of effectiveness:

- scores on aptitude or standardized achievement tests
- attendance, in-school behavior, and delinquency rates
- measurement of student, teacher, and parent attitudes.

Using case study and correlational methodologies, this research has identified school structures and processes that may explain differences found on selected measures of effectiveness. Each study has generated its list of explanatory factors, and periodically, reviewers have attempted to relate these factors. For example, having reviewed not only studies of school serving similiar communities and having significantly different effects, but also case studies of achieving schools and school improvement program evaluations, Purkey and Smith (1983) suggested a concept of an effective school. That concept involved two sets of variables. The concept involved two sets of variables. The first set is composed of the following nine organizational-structural variables.

- School-site management. A number of studies indicate that leadership and staff of the school need considerable autonomy in determining how they address problems.
- Instructional leadership. Principal leadership is necessary to initiate and maintain school improvement.
- Staff stability. Once a school experiences success, retaining the staff seems to maintain effectiveness or to promote further success.
- Curriculum articulation and organization. At the secondary level, a planned, purposeful program of courses seems to be academically more beneficial than an approach that offers many electives and few requirements.
- School-wide staff development. Essential change involves altering people's attitudes and behavior as well as providing them with new skills and techniques.
- Parental involvement and support. Through the evidence on this issue is mixed, parents need to be informed of school goals and school responsibilities.

- School-wide recognition of academic success. The school culture is partially reflected in its ceremonies, its symbols, and the accomplishments that it officially recognizes.
- Maximized learning time. If schools emphasize academics, then a greater proportion of the school day will be devoted to academic subjects.
- District support. Fundamental change, building level management, and staff stability, all depend on support from the district office.

The second set is composed of four process variables:

- collaborative planning and collegial relationships among staff
- sense of community
- clear goals and high expectations
- order and discipline.

This conception rejects the view that schools are composed of relatively discrete and static variables. Instead, schools are conceived as dynamic social systems made up of interrelated factors, the mix of which defines the unique personality and climate of each school.

Summary

Taken together, research on effective classrooms and effective schools suggests that the structure and processes of classrooms and schools do have an impact on student attendance, behavior, and achievement. They also suggest that this impact can occur in schools with significant numbers of students at risk.

The Effects of Early Childhood Interventions

Most of the research on the effects of early childhood interventions grows out of the federal programs of the 1960's that were designed to improve the chances of children from low socio-economic families to succeed in school. First, there was the Head Start program that served three, four, and five year olds; then, there was Follow Through that sought to strengthen the quality of education provided in grades K through 3, so that the effects of Head Start would be sustained. A number of studies have collected information on children served by these programs as they progressed through school. They have sought to identify both the effects of such programs and characteristics of the student, family, and program that might explain those effects. This section describes two such studies.

The ETS Study

The ETS study (Shipman, 1981) selected a small group of high and low achieving third grade children from a population of 1,017 children who had participated in Head Start programs in three sites (Lee County, Alabama; Portland, Oregon; Trenton, New Jersey) and on whom data had been collected for six years, beginning in 1969. The study assembled information on each of the children with respect to:

- the family, both status and process variables (e.g., ethnic membership, occupational level, mother's teaching styles and her attitudes toward the schools and the learning process)
- the teacher (e.g., background characteristics, attitudes, abilities, teaching goals)
- the classroom (e.g., program components and teacher-child and peer relationships
- the school (e.g., physical characteristics, organization, relationships among teachers and between teachers and administrative staff)
- the community (e.g., socio-economic status)
- the child (e.g., health, cognitive, perceptional-motor, affective, and social development).

Initial examination of the data for each child suggested that a unique history of factors may have influenced the child's high or low academic achievement. No single family, school, or child factor appeared to predict school success. What did emerge was that children who gained most in academic achievement experienced:

> *"... a continuing warm and stimulating classroom environment, with a home environment that provided the child emotional support in general and support for school activities in particular (e.g., visiting school, participating in classroom*

> *activities, knowledge of the child's functioning in school, higher expectations for the child's educational attainment, and, in some cases, the parent involvement in their own continuing education.)" (Shipman, 1981, p. 82).*

In effect, the achieving children acquired small increases in knowledge of school-relevant information, confidence, task orientation, and achievement motivation in their Head Start preschool programs. Those increases were reinforced and enhanced by teachers in kindergarten and the primary grades. Parents became engaged in supporting school activities and showed educational growth parallel to that of their child.

The High/Scope Study

The High/Scope study (Berrueta-Clement, Schweinhart, Barnett, Epstein & Weikart, 1984) sought to determine the longitudinal effects of a particular preschool program on:

- scholastic success (e.g., intellectual performance, scholastic achievement, scholastic placement and attainment, scholastic motivation, school attendance, classroom conduct)
- socio-economic success (e.g., employment history, job satisfaction, plans)
- social responsibility (e.g., peer relations; social activities; health; life objectives; juvenile detentions, petitions, dispositions; adult arrests, prosecution, sentences; use of social services and welfare assistance; pregnancies).

To achieve this objective, the study randomly assigned 123 children from impoverished homes in Ypsilanti, Michigan to two groups: a preschool program or a non-preschool program group. The study collected data from the two groups for 19 years. The data were analyzed by statistically comparing the differences between the groups. Those comparisons suggest that a quality preschool educational experience can contribute to children's future scholastic success, to socially responsible behavior patterns, and eventually to their socio-economic success.

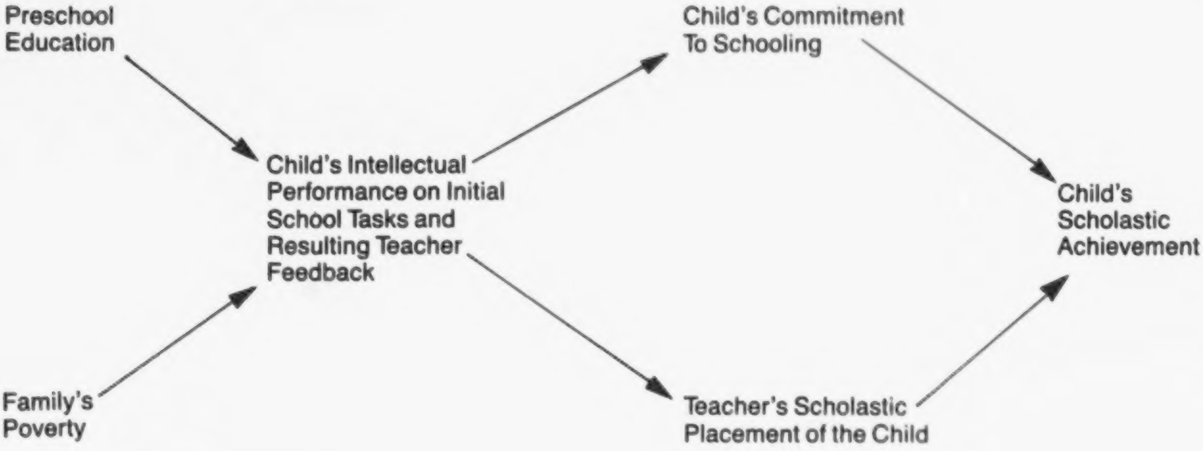
The study also presents a conceptional framework to explain how pre-school education leads to school success, and through school success to greater socio-economic success and increased social responsibility (see Figure II-2). Preschool education can counteract the effects of poverty on a child's intellectual performance on the initial scholastic tasks presented by teachers in kindergarten and the first grade. Teachers usually provide immediate feedback on that performance to the child, which, in turn, can affect the child's attitude towards school and commitment to schooling. Teachers use their assessments as the basis for placement in groups. Together, teachers' placement decisions and the child's commitment shape scholastic achievement and future scholastic attainment.

Finally, the study provides a small number of case descriptions to suggest hypotheses for future study. Specifically, these cases suggest four factors that seem to differentiate more successful and less successful Perry Preschool students.

- Parental and family support for education. While preschool programs may not be able to change a family that has a strong negative attitude towards education, they can reinforce or give concrete direction to a family's neutral or positive attitude to their child's present and future education.
- Role models. School staff can serve as role models to successful students, irrespective of whether family members serve as role models. Success and role models appear to interact: youngsters are successful because they have school staff role models, and they have school staff role models because they are successful.
- Sense of responsibility. Preschool experience can, in small ways, teach children to be responsible for themselves and to look out for others in the classroom, and these social skills can be further developed and reinforced in the more academically-oriented elementary school.
- Goal orientation. Preschool may instill a certain confidence in youngsters that can develop into a more active orientation — an orientation critical for success in school and employment.

Figure II-2

Influence of Preschool on Scholastic Attainment


Preschool Education
Family's Poverty
Child's Intellectual Performance on Initial School Tasks and Resulting Teacher Feedback
Child's Commitment To Schooling
Teacher's Scholastic Placement of the Child
Child's Scholastic Achievement

(Berrieta-Clement, et al., 1984, p. 23)

Summary

The findings of these studies are reinforced by other studies (e.g., Lazar, Darlington, Murray, Royce, & Snipper, 1982; Rubin, Olmsted, Szegda, Wetherby, & Williams, 1983; Meyer, Gersten, & Gutkin, 1984). In summary, current evidence suggests that:

- a quality preschool program increases the probability of students in low socio-economic families succeeding in school
- primary school teachers that build positively upon the knowledge, skills and attitudes developed through a preschool program increase the probability that such students will continue to succeed
- school efforts to involve the family as active supporters of school goals and objectives increases family's education aspirations for their children and contributes to their level of achievement
- quality early childhood programs have an immediate and positive effect on children's intellectual performance and can result in fewer special education placements, and the resulting early success in school affects student's commitment to schooling and can reduce the numbers of children who drop out of school.

The Effects of Alternative Programs

A few studies show that alternative programs can make a difference for marginal secondary students — students who are truant, adopt disruptive behaviors, perform poorly in their school's academic program, and thus, are potential dropouts. This section describes two such studies.

Wisconsin Center for Educational Research

In the early 1980's, researchers at the Wisconsin Center (Wehlage, Stone, Lesko, Nauman, & Page, 1984) studied six secondary school programs that both reflected current theory and research on "marginal" students and appeared to be effective. The study determined that these programs reflected two theoretical perspectives. The perspective of social psychology predicts that students will pursue academic activities and internalize the behaviors expected of them, only if they: (1) observe how others behave and the consequences of that behavior; (2) become attached to teachers, peers, and/or family members who model those behaviors; and (3) engage in those activities and behaviors and find them rewarding, not punitive. From this perspective, schools need to be structured so that each student, irrespective of the status of his/her knowledge, skills, and attitudes, develops positive attachments to teachers and peers, and finds participating in school activities rewarding.

The perspective of developmental psychology argues that adolescents face two critical tasks: the development of the ability to engage in formal, abstract thinking and the development of the ability to think from a sociocentric perspective. Therefore, for schools to succeed with adolescent students, they need to help students to:

- develop the skills to deal with problems involving increasing numbers of factors; the ability to use second-level symbols, there by, creating classes or generalizations that stand for specific objects; the ability to generate and weigh alternative explanations for the same event; and the capacity to create ideas and contrary-to-fact situations, to go beyond the known and extrapolate the possible.
- learn to see their actions from the perspective of others; to understand and appreciate the rights and interests of others, and to become socially responsible.

The researchers also identified four sets of characteristics that appear to make these programs effective.

- Administration. The effective programs were small to facilitate personal relationships between students and teachers. They had autonomy, separate space, and were selective. Teachers had extensive control over admissions, dismissal, award of credit, and development of courses. Teachers displayed a high degree of program ownership.
- Teacher Culture. Teachers believed that students deserved a second chance and that they could succeed. Teachers adopted an extended role. They were committed to helping students establish a sense of values and moral direction. They were flexible regarding academic standards. They used individualized strategies. They exhibited a strong sense of collegiality.
- Student Culture. The effective programs developed a positive peer culture through admissions, reputation, explicit verbal commitments, use of peer support strategies, deliberately planned group activities, and clear group norms.
- Curriculum and Instruction. The effective programs used a variety of individualized and cooperative learning strategies. Curriculum focused, at times, on real problems. Curriculum was, at times, experiental (e.g., involving community service, career internships, political/social action, community study, outdoor adventure). The most effective experiental activities included: (1) active role taking, (2) an opportunity to make decisions on important issues, (3) a structure for both field experiences and a reflective seminar, and (4) subject matter corresponding to the tasks, needs, and concerns of the group.

  They also reflected five principles derived from adolescent social development theory: (1) provided optimal challenge with manageable conflict, (2) required students to take initiative and responsibility, (3) were perceived by students as having integrity and dignity, (4) provided opportunities for acquiring a sense of competence and success, and (5) helped students engage in reflection about their experiences.

In concluding this study, the researchers argued that traditional approaches to marginal secondary school students (e.g., basic skills remediation, vocational training, career counseling, and work-study) did not adequately take into account the development needs of adolescent students.

As follow-up to the study, the Wisconsin researchers (Wehlage & Rutter, 1986) have been developing an instrument that could be used to monitor the impact of school and its programs on marginal students' personal and social orientation (see Section III). As part of the new National Center on Effective Secondary Schools, these researchers are revising the instrument and beginning a more indepth study of a set of schools or programs that have been highly effective with marginal students.

Gold and Mann Study

As follow-up to the National Institute of Education's 1978 study of school violence and vandalism, Gold and Mann (1984) were funded by NIE to identify programs that were effective with disruptive and delinquent youth. The study was designed with reference to a partial theory for delinquent behavior.

- Delinquent behavior is for some students a defense against external realities which threaten their self-esteem.
- Schools can be more threatening than home, job, or friends, because they have clear standards for achievement and provide limited means for meeting them.
- Incompetence as a student (e.g., low scholastic achievement, low aspirations, limited popularity, few close friends, isolated from status structures, limited involvement or success in extra curricular activities) lowers self-esteem.
- If a student has low social control (lack of strong social bonds that would be threatened by delinquent behavior), then delinquent behavior can serve to raise self-esteem by avoiding, neutralizing or counteracting situations that threaten self-esteem and/or by offering experiences that promise a form of self-enhancement (e.g., he/she has guts to challenge authority).
- If a student has high social control, delinquent behavior is accompanied by high anxiety and guilt; therefore, students tend to exhibit "flights from reality" or forms of mental illness.
- Therefore, school programs that increase the proportion of youth's successful experiences and provide warm accepting relationships with one or more adults can reduce delinquent, disruptive behavior of students who have low social control.

From this theoretical perspective, the researchers searched for programs that:

- enrolled significant numbers of disruptive and delinquent youth
- incorporated the elements suggested by the theory
- had been in operation long enough for people responsible for them to form a considered judgment regarding their future
- had been oversubscribed, and therefore, had a pool of students who could serve as a comparison group.

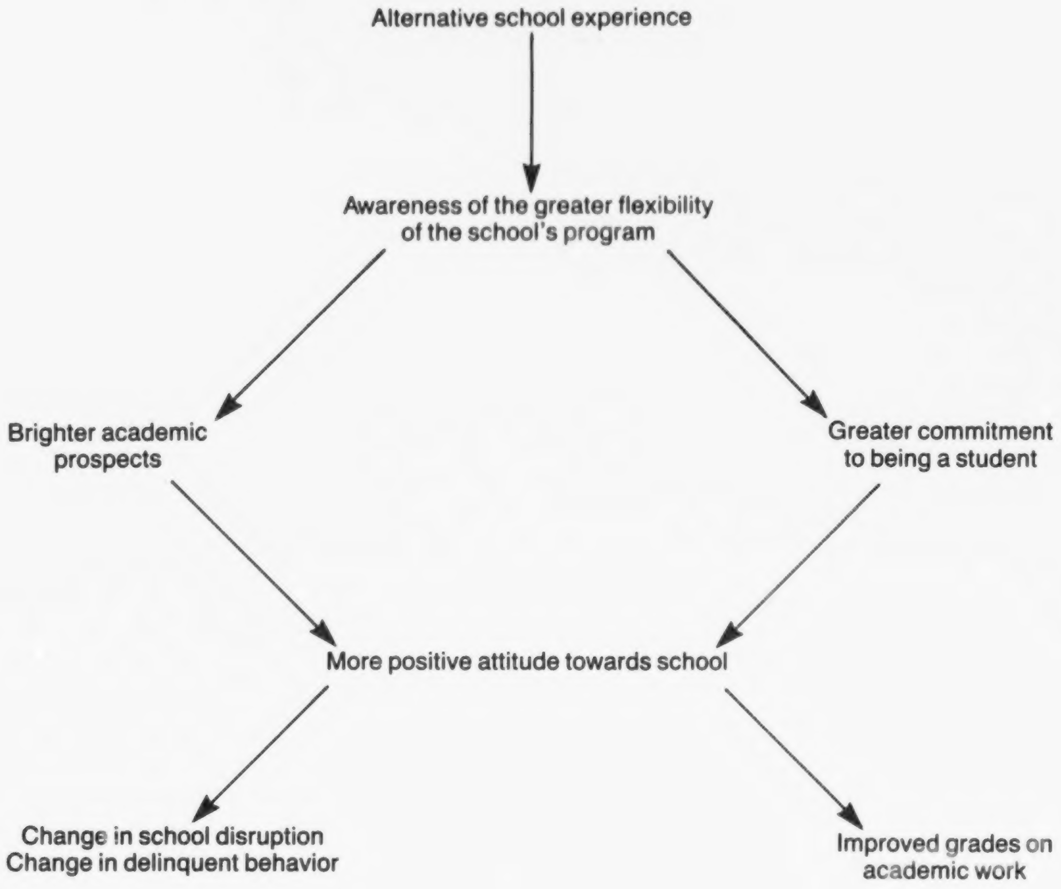
Using these criteria, they identified four programs — primarily, in white, suburban communities.

The study produced three major findings. First, the alternative programs did reduce disruptive and delinquent behavior of their students even after they returned to the traditional program. Second, study data supported the theory that students' attitudes toward themselves and toward school needed to change for behavior to change. Third, the programs were not effective with students displaying high anxiety or depression.

In analyzing the process data, the study supported the following model (Figure II-3). The critical difference between the alternative and the conventional programs for students displaying low anxiety was greater flexibility in helping students achieve the goals of their school and conform to the standards for behavior established by their school. Students who perceived school to be more flexible gained greater confidence in their academic prospects and also developed more commitment to being successful students. Together, this confidence and commitment affected students' attitude toward school, which, in turn, leads to a decline in disruptive and delinquent behavior and to improved academic performance. The study also found an improvement in student grades associated with participation in the alternative program.

Figure II-3

Model of Process Effects of Alternative School Experience


Alternative school experience
Awareness of the greater flexibility of the school's program
Brighter academic prospects
Greater commitment to being a student
More positive attitude towards school
Change in school disruption
Change in delinquent behavior
Improved grades on academic work

(Gold & Mann, 1984, p. 126)

Summary

These two studies suggest that alternative education programs for secondary students who are at risk can help some of those students to begin to succeed in school. The programs that these studies identified had the common theoretical perspective that to succeed in school, students need to develop social bonds to conventional school goals, rules, and activities, and to develop these bonds, students had to develop a positive perception of their teachers and of the instructional process, and become "attached" to one or more of their teachers or counselors. The Wisconsin study found that their programs also emphasized the developmental tasks of adolescence in their selection of content and the instructional processes. In addition, their programs emphasized the role of the peer culture and suggested that schools could gain its support.

Results of Current Efforts to Improve Schools Serving Significant Numbers of Students At Risk

Over the past half-dozen years, a numbers of district, state, and local programs have been initiated to stimulate school-based improvement efforts. To date, many of these have not reached the point in their development where they can provide definitive information about effects — particularly on students at risk. What they do provide is useful information about what changes are being made and what processes seem to be most effective. This section summarizes the results of two studies of such programs.

Study of School-Based Improvement Programs

This study (David & Peterson, 1984) collected information in 1981 from 32 elementary schools serving significant numbers of disadvantaged students and involved in six school improvement programs: New York City School Improvement Project (2 schools), New York City Local School Development (1 school), Schoolwide Projects Provision of Chapter 1 (19 schools), California School Improvement Program (5 schools), Florida School Advisory Councils (5 schools), and Individually Guided Instruction (3 schools). The schools were selected because they had the reputation of successfully implementing a school-based improvement process. The 32 schools were visited and key persons involved in the processes were interviewed. These included the principal, several teachers, district staff, and consultants or change agents. Because the improvement efforts were relatively new, study questions focused on identifying conditions that appeared to contribute to their current success.

The study found that these schools' staffs were able to establish planning groups, develop written plans, and implement changes. However, the changes made in most of the schools, were in non-instructional areas — for example, physical plant, discipline policies, and community relations. The data collected suggest several reasons for this focus:

- staff belief that these changes were prerequisite to instructional improvement
- staff view that these were schoolwide issues that affected everyone and therefore required schoolwide solutions
- the comparative ease with which staff were able to reach consensus on the definition of the problem and on possible solutions
- the comparative ease with which staff were able to specify what was required to implement a solution.

Those schools that did consider instructional issues tended to focus on goals and objectives, and side-stepped issues related to changes in teaching behavior that might be required to attain such goals. In the few schools that actually made changes in instructional practices, such changes were associated with a strong leader (principal, staff member, or outside change agent) who provided a vision of more effective instructional practice and made clear how that practice compared with current practice; focused the change effort on implementing that practice and defining what staff actions would be required; and acquired the resources (e.g., time, skills, and funds) required to implement the changes.

In reflecting on these relatively successful school-based improvement efforts, the researchers were impressed by how difficult it was to establish school-based improvement efforts that affected how teachers worked with students. Critical to such efforts were leadership, a core of favorably disposed staffs, knowledge of what were more effective practices, and the availability of time, resource persons, and some discretionary funds.

School Action Effectiveness Study

In the fall of 1980, the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention funded 17 demonstration projects. This initiative was premised in part on the observation that delinquent behavior is associated with a number of school-related problems, including absenteeism, disruptive in-class behavior, and dropping out. It was also based on the theory that commitment to educational and other conventional goals, attachments to teachers and the school, and acceptance of rules, are bonds of social control that prevent delinquency; and the theory that appropriate educational interventions can strengthen those bonds.

The initiative was targeted at secondary schools (grades 6 through 12) in relatively high crime communities, with high rates of delinquency, drop-out, suspensions, expulsions, absenteeism, and youth unemployment. Its broad goals were to:

- decrease delinquent behavior in and around school
- decrease dropouts, expulsions, suspensions, and truancy
- increase attendance
- increase academic success in school and student graduation rates
- improve early post-schooling labor market experiences or training.

The initiative also set forth objectives that were seen to be instrumental for achieving these goals:

- making school discipline fair and consistent, while providing for due process
- increasing youth, parent, and community agency participation in school decision-making in order to reduce student alienation and feelings of powerlessness
- decreasing the grouping of students according to inappropriate criteria (e.g., class or race)
- providing structures for learning that promote educational and social development, because it is tailored to realistic levels of performance for individual students.

Researchers at Johns Hopkins University's Center for Social Organization of Schools (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, and Cooke, 1983) received a multi-year contract to evaluate these 17 projects in ways that would strengthen the projects and contribute to knowledge about delinquency prevention theory and practice. To these ends, the researchers undertook two major tasks in addition to collecting and analyzing data related to project implementation and effects. First, they worked with project staffs to help them clarify their plans: their objectives, their theories for action, the definition of their interventions, and standards for implementation of their interventions (see Section V for a description of method used). Second, the researchers developed a battery of measures that could be used to assess project effects on students and teachers, and on organizational climate (see Section III for a description of these measures).

The 17 projects undertook a wide range of interventions. These included:

- introducing a different curricula (e.g., law-related, vocational or career education, affective education) — 10 projects
- modifying instructional practices (e.g., grouping of students, classroom management, individualized instruction, cooperative learning strategies) — 13 projects.
- conducting inservice programs to improve teacher understanding of needs of at-risk students and how they can be addressed — 12 projects
- increasing student participation in decision-making and in co-curricular activities — 14 projects
- involving parents and other community members and agencies in the school; improving student-parent relations — 13 projects
- providing individual or group counseling — 16 projects
- clarifying school rules and improving how they are enforced — 11 projects
- improving school climate — 8 projects.

In implementing their particular mix of interventions, all projects made changes within the structure of the regular school, but 8 of the 17 tried to implement some form of an alternative school or program for particular groups of students.

The specific case evaluations provide overviews of the implementation efforts of the projects. They suggest that the projects were overly ambitious in the number and scope of changes they wanted to bring about within the relatively short period of three years. The cases identify only a small number of interventions as well implemented, and many interventions as only partially implemented. In spite of these difficulties, the researchers concluded that:

- schools involved in the initiative were safer, based on reports by both students and teachers
- schools in three projects had significantly better attendance; and no project school had lower student attendance
- schools in four projects significantly improved on the measure of student alienation
- schools in four projects significantly improved on the measure of student self-concept
- teacher morale increased overall.

The three projects that achieved the most positive results on these school-level outcomes implemented interventions that affected the total school environment.

Summary

The themes struck in these two studies are reinforced by evaluation results that are becoming available for school improvement programs underway in a number of cities across the country (e.g., McCarthy, Canner, & Chawla, 1982; Levit, 1985). These themes include the following:

- For schools to improve, districts need to create supportive conditions — for example, provide a focus for planning, provide time for planning, make accessible outside expertise and information, help schools assess needs, monitor school efforts actively, provide data regarding progress, and maintain the program as a high priority for three to five years at least.
- Critical to the success of school-based projects are: (1) a shared belief that schools can make a difference, and (2) school-based leadership that can articulate a vision of more effective practice to which staff become committed.
- In general, school-based improvement projects tend to focus on school-wide issues (e.g., discipline, climate) on which they can achieve rather rapid success and which can influence staff morale and student behavior. However, for significant change to occur in student attitude, behavior, and achievement, school staff must ultimately modify how they work with students in their classes.
- Some specific school-based improvement projects are affecting the level of student achievement, as measured by standardized achievement tests. Though used as the primary measure of student achievement, standardized tests frequently are not well-aligned to what is being taught, nor are they designed to provide highly reliable information regarding the extent to which specific students are mastering particular objectives.
- Currently, there are no easy-to-plan and easy-to-implement solutions to the problems of students at risk; there are, however, increasing numbers of schools that are making the kinds of changes that affect both how students perceive themselves, their teachers, and their school; and what knowledge and skills they acquire.

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SECTION III

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES IN NEED OF ATTENTION

This section provides educators with an overview of how they can use available data to identify:

- individual students in need of assistance
- educational practices at classroom, grade, and building levels that need to be modified in order to make them more effective with students at risk.

This section also includes descriptions of instruments that might be used to gather student (and staff) perceptions that may be useful to conducting the above two tasks. It also includes examples of data systems that schools and districts in Pennsylvania are implementing to help their staff routinely perform these tasks.

Overview of Data School Staffs Can Use

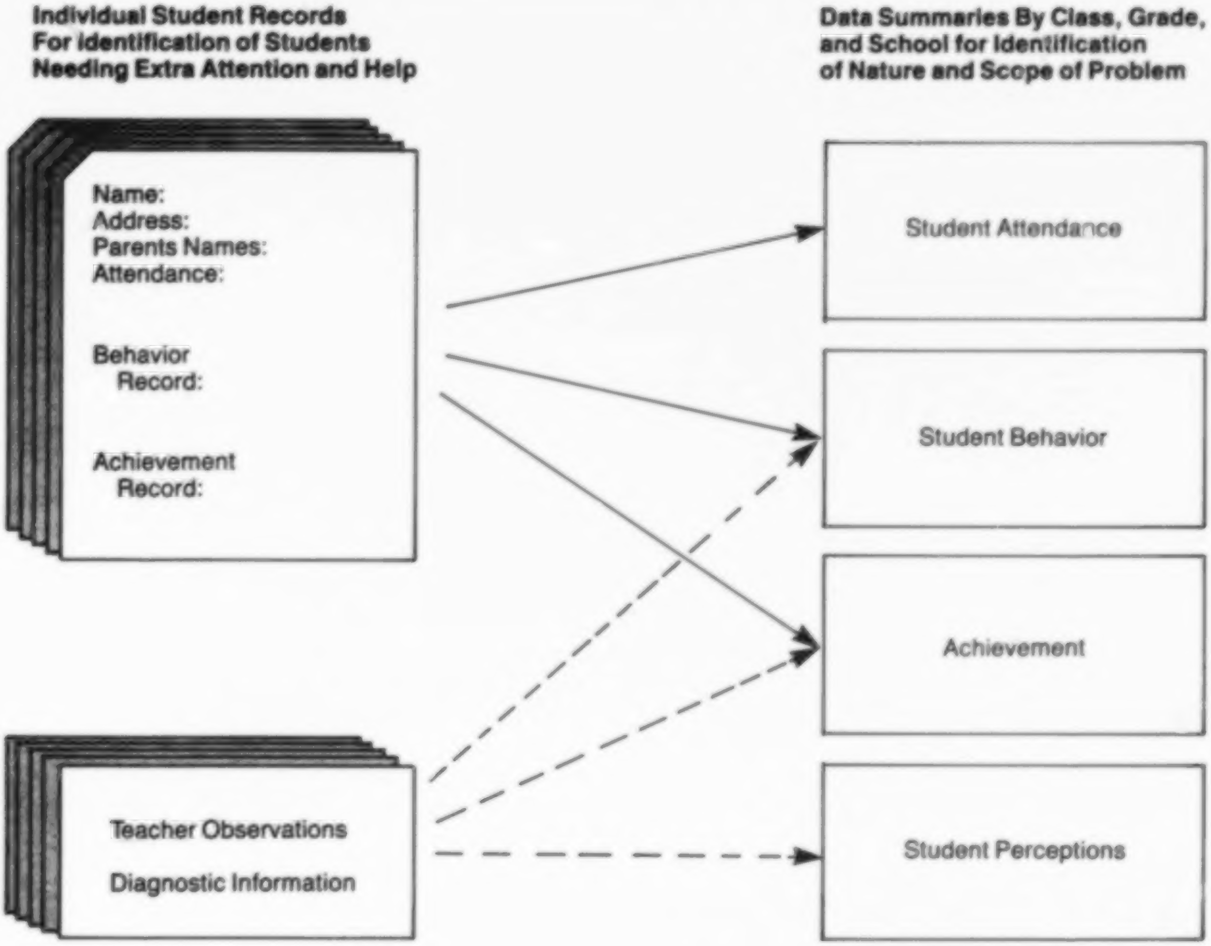
Figure III-1 provides an overview of the kinds of data that can help school staff identify individual students in need of assistance and educational practices in need of improvement. The figure suggests two types of individual records:

- the traditional individual student records that provide attendance information (e.g., tardies, absences, classes cut), behavioral information (e.g., referrals to the principal or disciplinarian, suspensions, expulsions), achievement information (e.g., test scores, grades, teacher comments or report cards)
- more detailed information on individual students that result from structured observations of the behaviors students exhibit in various settings, or from diagnostic procedures administered by teachers, counselors, or others.

The figure also suggests four types of data summaries that can help a staff determine what practices may need attention: compilations of individual student attendance, behavior, and achievement data, and summaries of student perceptions.

Figure III-1

Data Sets for Determining Nature & Scope of the Problems


Individual Student Records
For Identification of Students
Needing Extra Attention and Help
Data Summaries By Class, Grade, and School for Identification of Nature and Scope of Problem
Name:
Address:
Parents Names:
Attendance:
Behavior Record:
Achievement Record:
Teacher Observations
Diagnostic Information
Student Attendance
Student Behavior
Achievement
Student Perceptions

Identifying Students Needing Attention

Ideally, student records document the extent to which schools are achieving their mission with each student. Typically, student records provide information on attendance, behavior, and achievement. The attendance records not only note excused and unexcused absences, but also incidents of being late to school or cutting specific classes. The behavioral records not only note formal school actions like suspensions and expulsions, but also note, in specific terms, incidents that require teachers to take disciplinary action (e.g., keeping a student after school, sending a report to parents) or result in the teacher sending a student to the principal for disciplinary action (e.g., personal reprimand or in-school suspension). Finally, such records include copies of grades received, summaries of performance on standardized tests, and maybe even examples of student work. In special cases, student records may include the results of diagnostic work-ups that have been requested by teachers or that are required for students to receive Chapter 1 or other types of special services.

Having this information does not mean it is used. Student records have to be reviewed systematically at regular intervals to identify students who need attention and to initiate a series of actions that result in new approaches that may be more successful.

Examples of three school districts implementing or maintaining such systems are described at the end of this section. Specifically, Marple-Newtown School District's system includes a comprehensive diagnostic assessment of each student as they enter school that is added to as they progress through school. The information gathered is used by staff to inform placement decisions and instructional planning. Harrisburg School District's system is used for early identification of potential school dropouts, so that school staff can take steps to ensure that each identified student has the kind of program and help that will keep him or her in school. Finally, Quakertown School District's system is a variation of the Student Assistance Program (SAP) that the Pennsylvania Department of Education is helping schools and districts to implement. It has four principal components:

- a training program for school staff that helps them identify and work more effectively with students in need
- policies and procedures that guide how staff identify and refer students. Included among the procedures are referral forms that encourage staff to systematically review student records and observe student behavior
- a student assistance team made up of teacher, administrators, counselors, and specialists who are trained in how to interpret and use information supplied by staff about a particular student, and then, how to develop and implement a plan for working with that student
- linkages with local agencies that can help develop and implement out-of-school activities and programs to help particular students in need.

Identifying Educational Practices in Need of Improvement

School staff can adopt the view that the problem lies within the individual student, or they can adopt the view that the problem lies, in part, in the structure and nature of the school experience and, in part, the interaction between the school experience and the student. This second view requires that information about individual students be aggregated at class, grade, and school levels to discern patterns and identify areas for action. For example:

- summaries of attendance data at the classroom level may identify that there are some classes for which students are never late, while there are other classes for which students are routinely tardy
- summaries of behavioral data may identify classes that have more referrals to the office for discipline than others
- summaries of achievement data may suggest that students at certain grade levels in certain schools fail to acquire skills that students at the same grade levels in other schools do
- summaries of achievement and attendance data for given schools may suggest a relationship between poor performance on standardized achievement tests and attendance rates
- summaries of attendance data at the building level may suggest that some schools have a much higher level of dropouts than other schools.

Some school staff have difficulty finding the time and energy to compile such data and search for such patterns. However, because of state reporting requirements, attendance data is generated at classroom, school, and district levels. Also, schools can obtain from testing companies analyses of student performance on individual items and on learning objectives for classes, grades, and schools. With these two sets of data as a starting point, school staff can acquire the skills to use the data to identify areas that may need attention. Over time, they can consider using other types of data and explore the use of low cost computer systems or services to facilitate the identification of potentially important patterns of student attendance, behavior, and achievement.

Examples of two districts that are developing systems to provide data summaries to support school-based improvement are described at the end of this section. First, Pittsburgh School District is storing student achievement and attendance data in a microcomputer, so that it can be easily accessed by school staff. Staff can obtain from the computer information by individual, group, and class to help them identify both students needing attention and practices that may need to be modified.

Second, the Philadelphia School District has developed a system for providing each school and its community with an annual data profile that summarizes information on student enrollment, attendance, and achievement; information on staff and school programs; and information that allows comparison with district norms and other schools serving similar populations. The district is also developing a system for providing selected schools quarterly with information on student progress on mastery of specific skills and content, by both class and grade levels. This information is to help those schools initiate and sustain school-based improvement efforts.

Obtaining and Using Student and Staff Perceptions

As the research reviewed suggests, student perceptions of their school, their teachers, and themselves can be helpful in identifying areas for improvement. Four instruments that are available to help schools and districts collect such student perceptions (and in two cases, related staff perceptions) are: (1) Educational Quality Assessment (EQA), (2) Quality of School Life (QSL) Scale, (3) Effective Schools Battery (ESB), and (4) Wisconsin Youth Survey (WYS). (See the following detailed descriptions of these instruments.) Two of the instruments have been designed with students at risk as the focus (ESB and WYS); the other two (EQA and QSL) provide data that can inform the planning of improvement efforts related to students at risk.

Educational Quality Assessment (EQA)

This instrument, developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education for use at 4th, 6th, and 7th grade levels, contains several sections that are particularly relevant: Self-Concept in School, Health, Understanding Others, Citizenship/Social Responsibility, Work Opportunities and Attitudes, and Condition Variables from Students. These sections collect information about student self-concept and expectations, as well as information about student decision-making in the areas of health (e.g., drugs and alcohol), social situations (e.g., racial, religious or cultural diversity), and legal issues (e.g., rights and properties of others). (See Figure I-3 for examples of these items.) EQA also includes an instrument to gather teacher perspectives about expectations, student interest and involvement in school, and school climate.

Quality of School Life (QSL) Scale

The Quality of School Life Scale asks students (upper elementary through high school) to assess three dimensions of school life: satisfaction with school, commitment to classwork, and reactions to teachers. It is based on the theory that students who positively assess these dimensions will be more apt to stay in school, develop a lasting commitment to learning, and use the school setting as an advantage.

Effective Schools Battery (ESB)

This instrument was developed at the Johns Hopkins University's Center for Social Organization of Schools to assist in research about how school environments can contribute to delinquency, dropout, and school failure. The ESB asks students for their perceptions of key school environment elements (e.g., rules, rewards, student influence), and of themselves and their peers. It also surveys teachers about school climate. The ESB provides information that can help a school staff identify elements of the school environment that need attention and assess the effect of changes made in those elements on students and teachers.

Wisconsin Youth Survey (WYS)

The survey was developed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to assess the impact of various interventions designed to encourage at-risk secondary students to continue in school. The instrument obtains information for assessing students' sociocentric reasoning; social bonding to peers, school and teachers; academic self- concept; locus of control; and self-esteem. Data has been collected that suggests the instrument is able to discriminate among these possible program emphases. The WYS is based upon the belief that schools are unlikely to have much effect on students at risk unless there are some fundamental adjustments in the way the institution interacts with them. The establishment of positive social bonds between students and their teachers and peers is viewed as an essential starting point for reversing student alienation.

Educational Quality Assessment (EQA)*

Developer: Pennsylvania Department of Education

Available from:
Division of Educational Testing and Evaluation
Bureau of Educational Planning and Testing
1-717-787-4234

Grade Level: Elementary and Secondary (Grades 4, 6 and 7)

Rationale:

- Of the twelve Goals of Quality Education for Pennsylvania, several specifically address areas of concern for students at risk, and can be assessed by the EQA process.

Purpose:

- Measure objectively the adequacy and efficiency of the educational programs offered by the public schools of the Commonwealth
- Provide each school district with relevant comparative data to enable directors and administrators to more readily appraise their educational peformance and to inform Long Range Planning.

Description:

The EQA includes a student questionnaire and a teacher questionnaire. Several sections of EQA are particularly relevant for assessing student and teacher perceptions as they relate to the issue of students at risk.

The Self-Concept in School section asks students to report how they perceive themselves being accepted, having control over their lives, and being successful in school. The items in this section are grouped into three clusters: teacher relationships, peer relationships, and school self-image. The section is based upon the rationale that:

- all students, regardless of their grade level and pattern of talents, should experience a school environment that will enhance their self-concept
- a constructive school climate can positively influence student self-confidence, sense of competency, feelings of acceptance, expectation of success and belief in their ability to exert an influence in life's affairs
- self-concept is a personal judgment of worthiness
- a feeling of self-worth and acceptance by teachers and classmates is critical to the development of self-concept.

Closely related to this section are some of the conditional variables that ask students to report their:

- perception of classroom discipline
- interest in school
- ability to complete homework
- educational expectations
- perception of parental educational expectations for them
- perception of parental interest in school.

Also of potential value are items from the Health, Understanding Others, and Citizenship/Social Responsibility sections. These sections respectively ask students to describe what action they would take in certain health situations (e.g., use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs); in certain social situations that involve persons who have different racial, religious, socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds; and in situations that involve legal issues and the rights and properties of others.

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*For a full description; see *Educational Quality Assessment Commentary,* Pennsylvania Department of Education, 1985.

As designed, EQA provides information about grades 4, 6 and 7.

In addition, it should be noted that the EQA also collects potentially useful information from teachers. Specifically, it asks teachers to respond to statements describing teacher expectations, student interest in learning, student attendance, student behavior, classroom and school climates, academic emphasis, and teacher-administration relationships.

Use:

Administration of the EQA can be accomplished by matrix sampling in which each student takes only a portion of the total number of items in each instrument. EQA may be requested by schools/districts as often as yearly, and is recommended to be used at least once every three to five years.

The completed answer sheets must be sent to the Division of Educational Testing and Evaluation (PDE) for scoring of the scantron forms.

Results:

Schools receive an individual profile from PDE. These profiles describe both student and teacher data. Normed data is also received, which enables a school to compare its results to the district and to similar schools in Pennsylvania. The EQA data that focuses on the areas of self-concept, health, understanding others and citizenship will be especially significant when assessing students at risk and related school programs.

Costs:

EQA is available at no cost to Pennsylvania schools, upon request.

The Quality of School Life Scale (QSL)

Developer: Joyce L. Epstein
James M. McPartland

Available from: Riverside Publishing Company
8420 Bryn Mawr Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60631
1-800-323-9549

Grade Level: Elementary and Secondary (Grades 4-12)

Rationale:

- Establishing positive student reactions to school life is an important objective for schools.
- Positive reactions to schools may increase the likelihood that students will stay in school and develop a lasting commitment to learning.

Purpose:

- Provide a descriptive gauge of the general affective condition of education (school, classwork, teachers) as perceived by students.
- Assist teachers, administrators, and researchers to formally measure students' reactions, to describe and monitor the conditions of school life, and to make decisions about the success of school programs.

Description:

- The QSL is a 27-item questionnaire that asks students to answer questions about themselves and their school by using true-false, multiple choice, and agree-disagree formats.

  Responses to each questionaire are analyzed to provide information on three dimensions of the concept of the quality of school life.

  1. Satisfaction with school — examines students' general reactions to school. Students who are positive may be more likely to behave in socially acceptable ways.
  2. Commitment to classwork — deals with the level of student interest in class work. Students who find class assignments and projects interesting and important, may learn more and have more positive attitudes towards learning.
  3. Reactions to teachers — examines student evaluation of instructional and personal interactions with teachers. These relationships may be the key to student acceptance of educational goals; differences in student dependent and independent behavior and attitudes toward authority (in and out of school).

  In addition to the survey booklets, the QSL includes a technical manual with directions for the administration and scoring of the QSL, research data for comparison of scores and directions for constructing local norms, assistance in interpreting scores, information on the development and psychometric properties of the scale, and suggestions for the use of QSL.

  Extensive data on the reliability and validity of the QSL are included in the administration and technical manual.

Use:

The QSL can provide descriptive information that contributes to a comprehensive assessment of school life. Scores may be cited and compared for each grade level, and differences within and across grades compared for specific subgroups (males/females, blacks/whites, English majors/Science majors). It can be used for either formative or summative evaluative purposes. QSL can also be used to identify potential dropouts, by groups or individuals (early identifications of profound student dissatisfaction may assist in the remediation of conditions of school life for troubled students).

The QSL questionnaire may be administered to small or large groups of students in about 20 minutes. Most students in grades 4-12 can read and interpret the items without difficulty.

Results:

Completed booklets, anonymous or not, can be scored at the building level. Directions for scoring are included in the manual.

The scoring system is a simple tally of the number of positive evaluations for each subscale and for the total scale. The more positive the evaluations, the higher the affective quality of school life. A scoring template is provided for convenience of scoring.

National norms are not available for the QSL. However, researcher norms provide the external criteria for users who want to compare the QSL scores of their own students with the scores of other students or schools having similar characteristics.

Costs:

Packets of 35 questionnaire booklets, 1 manual, and 1 scoring key	$11.13

Effective School Battery (ESB)

Developer: Gary D. Gottfredson
Johns Hopkins University

Available from: Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. (PAR)
P.O. Box 98
Odessa, Florida 33556
1-800-331-TEST

Grade Level: Secondary School (Grades 7-12)

Rationale:

- Particular characteristics of the school environment can put students at high risk of adolescent problem behavior — delinquency, dropout, and school failure.
- A psychometrically sound measurement of specific dimensions of school environment can be useful for program planning and evaluation.

Purpose:

- Diagnose problems — ESB provides a systematic and thorough assessment of school climate and the attitudes, perceptions and behavior of teachers and students in a school. Resulting profiles allow the school to see areas of strengths and weaknesses, define problems or goals, and set priorities for school improvement.
- Open up communications — summarizes the views of teachers and students, and leads to constructive discussions of strengths and weaknesses.
- Evaluate improvement programs — ESB provides a tool for program evaluation.
- Provide ongoing indicators of organizational health — ESB serves as one component of a set of school performance indicators to alert administrators to changes in the conditions of schools as they emerge.

Description:

The ESB includes a student questionnaire and a teacher questionnaire. Students and teachers answer questions about themselves and their school using multiple choice, agree-disagree, or true-false formats. Responses to each questionnaire are analyzed to provide two kinds of information: (1) information on the perceptions that each group has of the school's climate, and (2) information on the characteristics of that group.

Six climate measures are assessed in the student questionnaire: safety, respect for students, planning and action, fairness, clarity, and student influence. Four student characteristics are tapped: social background, peer relations, attitudes, and psychosocial development.

The teacher questionnaire asks for information related to nine measures of school climate: safety, staff morale, planning and action, smooth administration, resources for instruction, school race relations, involvement of parents and community, student influence, and use of grades as a sanction. The seven teacher characteristics assessed are: pro-integration attitude, job satisfaction, interaction with students, personal security, classroom orderliness, professional development, and nonauthoritarian attitude.

In addition to the two eight-page questionnaires with answer sheets, the ESB includes a user's manual, a coordinator's manual, and survey administrator's instructions.

Extensive data on the reliability and validity of all measures included in the ESB are presented in the user's manual.

Use:

Administration of the ESB to all students and teachers in a school is recommended, but administering to a carefully drawn sample can also produce dependable results. Administration of either the student or the teacher inventory is also an alternative.

The student inventory can be completed by nearly all students in 50 minutes. It is recommended that the inventory be administered to groups of 25-35 persons, although large-group administration is possible. Administration of the teacher inventory is most efficiently done at a staff meeting. The recommended time for administration of either inventory is late April or early May.

Completed answer sheets, all anonymous, must be sent to a scoring service for optical scanning and the preparation of school profiles. Special scoring services (e.g., the calculation of results for particular subgroups) are also available.

Results:

Each school that uses the entire ESB (i.e., collects data from both teacher and students) receives four profile sheets. Two profile sheets show the averaged scores for the school's climate, one based on student reports and the other on teacher reports. The other two profile sheets describe the student and teacher populations. On each profile sheet, scores are reported in percentile ranks and graphically. Examples of ESB profiles and discussion of how they might be interpreted are presented in the user's manual. These profiles present some actual patterns of results and show how they might be interpreted.

Profile sheets can be used in setting priorities and making plans in a school, in opening up communication in a school, in evaluating school programs, in providing ongoing indicators of organizational health, and in system-wide planning and assessment.

Costs:

Introductory Kit (includes user's manual, coordinators manual, survey administrator's instructions, one each of the student and teacher survey booklets and answer sheets)	$20.00
Extra User's Manual	15.00
Coordinator's Manual	2.50
Survey Administrator's Instructions (pkg/10)	3.50
Student Survey Booklet - Reusable (pkg/50)	37.50
Teacher Survey Booklet - Reusable (pkg/25)	18.75
Student Answer Sheets (pkg/50)	12.50
Teacher Answer Sheets (pkg/25)	6.25

Scoring:

There are two costs: (1) scanning of answer sheets ($.75 each for less than 200, $.70 each for 201-500, $.60 each for 501-1000, $.50 each for 1001+); and (2) preparation of a school report, which includes four profile sheets ($50.00 per school).

Wisconsin Youth Survey (WYS)

Developer: Gary G. Wehlage
Calvin Stone
Robert A. Rutter
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Available from: National Center of Effective Secondary Schools
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1025 W. Johnson Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
1-608-263-7575

Grade Level: Secondary Schools (Grades 7-12)

Rationale:

- Programs for at-risk students should be evaluated in terms of personal and social growth of students.
- Many at-risk students have negative orientations toward self and others.
- These negative orientations can be changed through school interventions built on success and respect for students.

Purpose:

- Assess the effects of various interventions designed for at-risk students by measuring changes in students' personal and social orientations.

Description:

The Wisconsin Youth Survey gathers data on selected attitudes and orientations thought to be important in at-risk students' decisions to drop out of school. Academic achievement for students enrolled in programs for at risk students should be assessed separately.

Students answer questions about themselves and their school using an agree-disagree format. Responses to each questionnaire are analyzed to provide information in the following areas:

- sociocentric reasoning (concern about responsibility for school, for others)
- social bonding to peers (feelings and attitudes about friends, "I am in the wrong group to feel part of this school")
- social bonding to school (feelings and attitudes about school, "I feel satisfied with school because I am learning a lot")
- social bonding to teachers (feelings and attitudes about teachers, "My teachers often get to know me well")
- academic self-concept ("Most of the teachers I've had would say I'm a good student")
- negative teacher behavior ("Teachers often embarass students like me in front of class")
- perception of opportunity (feelings about education and economic opportunity, "Being poor hurts a person's chances in this school")
- conventional roles ("In today's world, you have to break some laws to get ahead")
- locus of control (control over events in one's life, "Every time I try to get ahead, something or somebody stops me")
- self-esteem ("I am able to do things as well as most other people.")

Data on the validity of the WYS and the reliability of each item is available.

Use:

The WYS has been shown to be effective in identifying changes in student attitudes and orientations attributable to program interventions of relatively short duration (up to one year). WYS also appears to be able to discriminate among program emphases, making it especially useful as "before" and "after" measurement of program impact of the various constructs (e.g., self-esteem, educational aspirations social bonding to school, peers or teachers).

The most reliable data on the effects of a program are obtained by sampling all students in a relatively small program (up to 200). In large schools or classes where the intervention is employed with all students, a 25% random sample is acceptable.

The WYS is an 80-item questionnaire for secondary students that can be completed in approximately 40 minutes. Completed scantron sheets should be sent to the testing and evaluation center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Costs:

For information on costs of the WYS and other services, contact Robert A. Rutter, 1025 W. Johnson St., Madison, WI 53706, (608) 263-7555.

Examples of Data Systems in Pennsylvania Schools

The following pages describe data systems in five Pennsylvania school districts. They were developed through telephone interviews, and were then checked for accuracy by the district contact person. Each description briefly presents: (1) the purpose of the system, (2) the target audience, (3) a description of major components, (4) the rationale, (5) the evidence available regarding the effectiveness of the system, (6) the school context, (7) the resources needed, (8) the history of its development, and (9) the name of a contact person (as of the fall of 1986).

These systems were identified with the help of state and Intermediate Unit staff. They are only a few examples of the types of systems that Pennsylvania schools and districts are planning and implementing to help them identify students in need of attention and educational practices in need of improvement. The Pennsylvania Department of Education hopes that these descriptions will encourage other districts and schools to share information about how they are using available data for these purposes (see overview). It also hopes that they will stimulate other districts and schools to assess and, perhaps, make improvements in how they are currently storing and using data about student attendance, behavior, and achievement.

MARPLE-NEWTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Educational Excellence for All Students

School/District Involvement:

- All schools (four K-6 elementary schools, one 7-8 school, one 9-12 high school)

Grades: K-12, with emphasis on early intervention

Project Start-up: in the mid-1970's

Purpose:

To identify early the educational needs of children and to adapt instruction to meet those needs.

Target Population:

All students.

Description:

The district's program has four key components.

- Early screening component. All children registered for kindergarten are assessed in May, prior to kindergarten, regarding speech/language, psychological, and physical development. In addition, parents are interviewed to obtain information about each child's early development and home environment.

  If needs are identified, the child returns during the summer for an intensive individual evaluation, along the same dimensions, but including an individual I.Q. test and an educational evaluation. The results of this evaluation are shared with parents, and together, school staff and parents determine the best placement for the child. A child may then be delayed entering school for a year, may enter regular kindergarten, may be placed in a special K-1 learning disability class, or a number of special education options.

  Additional assessment, using group measures (Boehm, OLMAT, Beery, and Metropolitan), occurs midway through kindergarten to provide information for determining placement in the first grade and/or referral to a summer clinic for further diagnosis. (Potentially gifted students are also identified by these assessments.)
- Teacher support system. The district provides a team made up of a school psychologist, nurse, reading/language arts specialist, and speech/language therapist to help teachers work more effectively with particular students. Teachers and the team meet as scheduled or whenever a need arises. Together, they develop a shared understanding of information available about the student and identify approaches a teacher may try to be more effective with that student.
- Supplementary instruction. Students who are placed in regular classes, but have special needs can receive supplementary instruction. Supplementary instruction is cooperatively planned by regular and resource room or remedial teachers, through use of an individualized educational plan (IEP). The resource room and remedial teachers coordinate their instruction with regular classroom instruction by using the same scope and sequence of objectives, by using either the same or closely matched instructional materials, and by meeting every two weeks to assess student progress and revise plans.
- Monitoring student progress. Student achievement is regularly reviewed to determine whether needs are being met. Procedures have been established to ensure that students obtain supplementary instruction whenever needs are identified and that students exit from those services when their performance suggests that those needs have been met.

Rationale:

The district's philosophy of education is to help all students achieve excellence. It believes that it can only achieve this goal if it understands where children are in their development when they enter school and if it uses that understanding to guide the development of instructional plans and placement.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

As a result of initial screening of pre-K children (for example, approximately 200 children in May 1986), approximately 8% were identified for more intensive summer evaluation (17 children in 1986). Based on that evaluation, approximately three-fourths of the students were placed in special education classes and one-fourth in regular kindergarten.

Based on mid-year kindergarten evaluation (February 1986) 20 students were identified as requiring further evaluation — with 50% being returned to the regular program and 50% entering special education programs.

The district notes that in 1985, only one 8th grade student was identified by the TELLS test, who was not receiving supplementary services.

School Context:

The Marple-Newtown School District serves a predominately white, suburban community west of Philadelphia. The majority of its households are middle and upper-middle class. The district's current enrollment is just over 3,000 students, only 1% of whom qualify for the free lunch program.

Either because of its screening program or because of the reputation of its program, Marple-Newtown attracts families with children who need special education services. Currently, 25% of the students are receiving some kind of special education service (including gifted).

Resources Needed:

Funding:	The district receives no special funding for the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten screening, or summer clinic programs. The district uses Special Education, Chapter 1, and TELLS funds for instructional staff and materials. The district estimates the initial screening of all pre-kindergarten students requires $30 per child and the following-up evaluations during the summer require $80 per child.
Staff:	District staff have the knowledge and skills needed to administer the screening instruments and interpret their results. Staff time is assigned in ways to facilitate collaborative planning and systematic review of student progress.

Historical Perspective:

This program grew out of research conducted by the District's Supervisor of Pupil Personal Services that identified some 40 variables that could affect children's success in school. This research guided the selection of screening procedures and instruments.

Contacts:

Dr. H. Lee Brubaker, Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services
C. Judith Stopper, Chapter 1 Project Director and Reading/Language Arts Consultant
Marple Newtown School District
120 Media Line Road
Newtown Square, PA 19073
(215) 359-4340

QUAKERTOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

School/District Involvement:

- Quakertown High School

Grades: 10-12

Project Start-up: September 1985

Purpose:

A major goal of this project has been to create a system of early identification, intervention, referral, and aftercare for students who exhibit all forms of at-risk behaviors. These behaviors include suicide, alcohol and drug abuse, defiance/belligerence, truancy, pregnancy, and eating disorders of anorexia and bulimia. In addition, the system is designed to identify youth who may suffer from all forms of abuse and neglect, or from malnourishment.

Target Audience:

Any individual student whom school personnel believe may be exhibiting these at-risk behaviors.

Description:

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is an intervention system set up within a school/district that trains school personnel to identify and refer "high risk" students who seem likely to benefit from the community's health and mental health treatment system. Individual students who demonstrate high risk behaviors are observed by staff personnel, who initiate the process by completing the "Behavior Assessment Form". This form is used as part of the data collection process of the SAP.

Quakertown High School has established two teams in the management program.

- Student Assistance Case Management Group. This team (composed of school counselors, administrators, nurse, psychologist, and representatives from the core team) receives the Behavior Assessment Form from staff. They meet weekly to collect data and provide a first level assessment of students' needs. If a support person assigned by this team cannot help a student resolve a problem, the student is then referred to the Student Assistance Core Team.
- The Student Assistance Core Team. This team, trained by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in the SAP model, includes a district central office administrator, counselor, nurse, SAP coordinator, and teacher. Their role is to establish and maintain school-based crisis intervention policies and procedures regarding early identification and treatment referrals. It also handles referrals from the Student Assistance Case Mangement Group, conducting either formal or informal interventions. Formal interventions indicate that the student is about to be expelled or go for an assesement with an outside agency. Informal intervention often results in seeing that the youth receives some kind of outside treatment. Parents are involved in the intervention process.

An essential element of the SAP is coordination with community drug and alcohol agencies, health and mental health resources, the YMCA, and hospital adolescent programs. Training efforts include the following.

- Staff (skill development in crisis identification, appropriate intervention/prevention, and referral processes to out-of-school treatment)
  - — inservice training for all faculty
  - — large group Problem Solving Theatre Performance
  - — on-site consultation for individuals and small groups

- Students
  - — small groups for peer referral
  - — large group Problem Solving Theatre Performance
  - — classroom programs
- Parents (on crisis identification and problem solving):
  - — all-day workshops
  - — local cable television instructional programs

Rationale:

The following set of beliefs have guided the development of this program.

- School staff, with the assistance of specialized training, can observe behavior and performance of students in order to identify early stages of crisis, and to facilitate appropriate treatment outside of the school.
- Early intervention in the lives of children and families will lead to the prevention of child and adolescent high risk, self-destructive behaviors.
- Early intervention programs and services will improve instruction for all students.
- The school shares the responsibility in the community for the mental and health needs of its children.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

By the end of the first year of the program, the school had intervened with 20% of all students. The district is currently planning ways to implement this program at the middle school level and is piloting a pre-intervention core team at the elementary level.

School Context:

Quakertown community is located in the north end of Bucks County. It is a rural area that is growing fast, due, in part, to its strategic location between Philadelphia and Allentown, and its nearness to Route 22 to New York. The district has 4,000 students, 2% of whom are minority.

Resources Needed:

Training:	Staff training in the SAP model provided by Pennsylvania Department of Education.
Funds:	Funds from the district are essential for the state training experience, transportation and substitutes, and for the salary of a Student Assistance Coordinator.
Time:	There should be a modification of teachers' schedules so that they have a common planning time, as needed.

Historic Perspective:

The district and the community were compelled to design ways to identify youth at risk following a tragic nine-week period in 1984, in which three students committed suicide. These suicides served as the impetus for action, the initial response being at the crisis intervention level. However, the long-range goal of this program was the development of an early intervention and prevention model. A key priority was to be the development of a system that promoted the observation and recording of individual student behavior, and the subsequent use of this data as the basis for future action.

Following a Board of School Director's resolution acknowledging the need for schools to provide leadership in addressing the problem of youth at risk, the Board also extended an invitation to the community to assist schools in this program. The community response has been essential to the success of the program.

Contact:

Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Personnel Service
Carole Carlson, Coordinator of Student Assistance
Quakertown Community School District
600 Park Avenue
Quakertown, PA 18951
(215) 536-2300

Student: ______________________________

Person Reporting: ______________________________

QUAKERTOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT FORM

Check appropriate response:

A. Academic Performance

_____ Present grade
_____ Drop in grades, lower achievement
_____ Decrease in class participation
_____ Failure to complete assignments
_____ Short attention span, easily distracted
_____ Poor short-term memory, i.e. can't remember from one day to another
_____ (Extremely perfectionistic achiever)

B. School Attendance (List dates beside area)

_____ Absenteeism ____________________
_____ Tardiness ____________________
_____ On absence list, but in school
_____ Cutting class ____
_____ Frequent visits to health office
_____ Frequent visits to counselor's office
_____ (Leaving for the bathroom after meals (secret vomiting possible)

C. Disruptive Behavior

_____ Defiance of rules
_____ Irresponsibility, blaming, denying
_____ Fighting
_____ Cheating
_____ Sudden outbursts of anger; verbally abusive to others
_____ Obscene language, gestures
_____ Attention-getting behavior
_____ Crying
_____ Extreme negatives
_____ Hyperactivity, nervousness
_____ (Was conformer, then began acting out)
_____ (Exhibits daredevil or self-abusive behavior)
_____ (Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge)

D. Atypical Behavior

_____ Change in friends
_____ Erratic behavior
_____ Sudden popularity
_____ Constant adult contact
_____ Older social group or significantly younger
_____ Sexual behavior in public
_____ Disoriented
_____ Unrealistic goals
_____ Inappropriate responses
_____ Depression
_____ Seeking adult advice without specific problem
_____ Defensive
_____ Withdrawn, difficulty in relating to others
_____ Talks freely about drug abuse

_____ (Expresses a desire to die)
_____ (Leaves poems, drawings, writing with death themes to be found)
_____ (Expresses hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness and confusion)
_____ (Sighs or cries often)
_____ (Has given away prized possessions)
_____ (Relentless pursuit of thinness while never being thin enough)
_____ (Preoccupation with food, calories, dieting, cooking and nutrition)
_____ (Strict dieting followed by eating binges)
_____ (Unwilling to change for gym)

E. Physical Symptoms

_____ Deteriorating personal appearance
_____ Sleeping in class
_____ Frequent cold-like symptoms
_____ Unsteady on feet
_____ Smelling of alcohol or marijuana
_____ Frequent complaints of nausea or vomiting
_____ Glassy, bloodshot eyes
_____ Slurred speech
_____ Unexplained, frequent physical injuries
_____ (Becomes preoccupied with personal health)
_____ (Has visited physician within the past three or four months)
_____ (Menstrual irregularity or loss of menstrual period)
_____ (Fatigue or listlessness)
_____ (Denial of hunger)
_____ (Abnormal weight loss)
_____ (Complains of being chilled)
_____ (Constipation, use of laxatives)
_____ (Skin rash, dry skin)
_____ (Loss of hair and nail quality)
_____ (Unexplained bruises or soreness in genital area)

F. Illicit Activities

_____ Vandalism
_____ Involvement in thefts and assaults
_____ Possession of paraphernalia (roach clips, bongs, etc.)
_____ Possession of drugs
_____ Selling drugs
_____ Carrying a weapon

G. Extra Curricular Activities

_____ Loss of eligibility
_____ Missed practice without substantial reason
_____ Dropped out
__________________________________ Name of Activity

H. Home Problem

_____ Family problems
_____ Runaway
_____ Job problems
_____ (Afraid to go home; reports injury by adult)
_____ (Reports absence of caregiver)
_____ (Reports inappropriate touching or assault by caregiver)
_____ (Attempts to control family eating habits)
_____ (Extreme manipulation of family and friends)
_____ (Family support network is small or nonexistent)

I. Additional Crisis Indicators

_____ (Suicide threat (verbal))
_____ (Suicide gesture or attempt)
_____ (Intense relationship with friend or goal is broken or thwarted)
_____ (Dramatic upswing in mood after depression)
_____ (Preoccupation with suicide in writing or media)
_____ (Expresses desire to join someone who has died)
_____ (Expresses desire to punish or gain revenge via deadly means)
_____ (Victim of domestic rape, violence, parental substance abuse, or combination)
_____ (Extreme aggression)
_____ (Extreme impulsiveness and immaturity)
_____ (History of suicide in the family, particularly an anniversary suicide)
_____ (Putting personal affairs in order)
_____ (Inquiries about donation of body and/or vital organs)
_____ (Planning of a funeral)
_____ (Preparation of a will)
_____ (Suicide note)
_____ (Talking of suicide or death)
    (a) (Statement of intent)
    (b) ("Tired of living")
    (c) ("Family better off without me")
    (d) (References to methods of killing)
    (e) ("I'm in the way all the time")

COMMENTS:

HARRISBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dropout Prediction Profile (DPP)

School/District Involvement:

- William Penn Campus (9-11)
- John Harris Campus (9-11)
- Roland Intermediate School (8th only)
- Scott Intermediate School (8th only)

Grades: 9-11 (Grade 8 added September, 1986)

Project Start-up: September 1, 1985

Purpose:

The primary goal of the Dropout Prediction Profile (DPP) and its accompanying dropout prevention program is to decrease the number of school dropouts by identifying the students at risk and providing support services designed to assist them in staying in school through graduation.

Target Population:

All potential dropouts in the eighth through eleventh grade, as identified by the Dropout Prediction Profile.

Description:

A central element of the Harrisburg program is the Dropout Prediction Profile (DPP) and an accompanying computer-based data analysis system. The instrument was developed by the district's school psychologist. The DPP is a five-item prediction instrument assessed at being 95% accurate. Through a statistical analysis of a list of possible predictors, the following were considered to be five of the most discriminating.

- Attendance — most recent yearly record of school absenteeism.
- Years of School Repeated — the total number of years that a student was retained throughout his school years.
- Achievement — grade average previous school year.
- Placement in any Special Behavioral Program — during any part of a year.
- Number of Parents in Home — one or two parents living with student.

Each of these items is assigned a raw score (e.g., number of days absent), a weighting (e.g., 20 days of absence are weighted differently from 80 days absent), and a scaled score (the computational result of the weighting system). The sum of the five scaled scores provides information necessary to make a prediction and decide whether a student is eligible for the Dropout Prevention Program. The DPP is supported by a computer-based system that allows a staff person to enter data for the five indicators on each new student and receive a computer printout each fall "flagging" students at risk.

The instrument has been tested and used with great accuracy at the high school level in an urban setting. It is currently being used on an experimental basis in the eighth grade, after being slightly modified. (The same items are used, but the sources of data require modification.)

Once a student is identified, they become part of the Dropout Prevention Program until graduation. The Dropout Prevention Program has two components. Component I provides the following services: counseling (behavior, career, prevention), liaison activities to monitor student progress through daily contact with staff having dropout prone students, and daily contact with at risk students. Component II provides auxillary programs designed to improve skills, increase self-esteem and increase interest in schools. An important element of the program is the linking up of a dropout-prone student with a school staff person who provides daily contact, support, and caring.

Rationale:

The development and use of DPP has been based upon the belief that it is possible to identify potential dropouts by using easily available data in a regular and systematic way. There is also the recognition that the early identification of potential dropouts is merely one important step in dropout prevention, the other step being the provision of support services that include the one-on-one contact of students at risk, with a concerned staff member.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Testing of the DPP indicates that student records can be used to develop factors for a predictive instrument. Statistical analysis has been used to reduce the numerous possible indicators to its strongest predictive elements selected for the DPP. In fact, this five-element instrument has been statistically assessed at being a more accurate predictor of dropouts than the composite 20-item instrument from which it originated. Results of a field scoring method indicate a satisfactory balance between correctly identified dropouts and correctly identified graduates with their respective percentages of 90.7 and 95.7. The overall dropout rate in 1984-85 in the Harrisburg School District was 15%. Through the use of the DPP and the special support services of their Dropout Prevention Program, the district sought to reduce this rate by 20%, to an overall 12% during the 1985-86 school year. The actual overall rate for the 1985-86 year was 11% or a reduction of 25%.

School Context:

The Harrisburg School District of 9,000 students is approximately 18% white, 70% black, 9% Hispanic, and 2% Asian and other. Approximately 60-65% of the students live at the poverty level. There is a high mobility rate among many students.

Resources Needed:

Staff:

- A dropout prevention specialist who identifies and works with dropout-prone students, and enters data on incoming students into the computer system.
- Part of a district's computer specialist's time to set up a system on the school's computer for using the DPP.

Funding: There are little or no direct costs involved with using the DPP, besides the aforementioned staff requirements. However, it may be necessary to provide relevant support services for dropout-prone students.

Historical Perspective:

The development of DPP came as the result of the recognition of need by the superintendent, and the interest of the school psychologist in developing an instrument that would be based upon a statistically sound testing procedure.

Contacts:

Dr. Clarence Nichols, School Psychologist (717-255-2554)
Barry Patterson, Dropout Prevention Specialist (717-255-2649)
Harrisburg School District
1201 N. Sixth Street
P.O. Box 2645
Harrisburg, PA 17105

HARRISBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT
DROPOUT PREDICTION PROFILE*
(High School Form)

Date of Birth ____________ Chronological Age ____________ Date ____________

Name ______________________ School/Grade __________ Sex __________

Factor	Descriptor	Raw Score	Weighting	Scaled Score
Attendance	Days sent last full year		20 days = 1 60 days = 3 40 days = 2 80 days = 4	
Years Repeated	Number of years not promoted		1 repeat = 1, 2 repeat = 2, etc.	
G.P.A.	Grade point average		3 or 4 = 0, 2 = 1, 1 = 2	
Alternative school	Any behavior placement		Yes = 1, No = 0	
Parents in home	One or two parent home		1 parent = 1, 2 parents = 0	
			TOTAL	

SCORING: 0 - 4 = Graduate
5 & Over = Dropout

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*Contact Dr. Clarence Nichols for permission to reproduce the Dropout Prediction Profile

HARRISBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT
DROPOUT PREDICTION PROFILE*
(Experimental Form for 8th Grade)

Student's Name ______________________ Current Date ______________

School ______________________ Grade/Section ______________

Date of Birth ______________________ Sex/Race ______________ Age ____

Teacher/Counselor ______________________

Factor	Descriptor	Raw Score	Weighting	Scaled Score
Attendance	Days absent last full year		20 days = 1 60 days = 3 40 days = 2 80 days = 4	
Years Repeated	Number of years not promoted		1 repeat = 1, 2 repeat = 2, etc.	
Achievement	Grade average		A or B = 0, C or D = 1, F = 2	
Behavior problems	Causes classroom disburbance		Rarely (Less than 1 per month = 0 Occasionally (1 per Mo.) = 0 Frequently (2 or 3 per Mo.) = 1 Very Frequently (4 per Mo.) = 2	
Parents in home	Number of biological parents in home		0 parents = 2, 2 parent = 0 1 parent = 1	
			TOTAL	

SCORING: 0 - 4 = Graduate
5 & Over = Dropout

Experimental Form: 5/86

____ Intermediate School Use
____ Elementary School Use

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*Contact Dr. Clarence Nichols for permission to reproduce the Dropout Prediction Profile

PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Superintendent's Management Information Center (M.I.C.) and Priority One School Performance Profiles

School/District Involvement:

- Superintendent's Management Information Center (M.I.C.) — all 255 Schools
- Priority One School Performance Profiles (projected for 73 elementary and 2 middle schools)

Grades: K-12

Purpose:

The Philadelphia School District uses two information systems designed to supply schools with building-level and summary data in support of local school improvement efforts. They are the improved and expanded Superintendent's Management Information Center (M.I.C.) and the newly developing Priority One Performance Profiles.

Target Audience:

These data systems are designed for use by school staffs, district administrators, and, in the case of the M.I.C., the community.

Description:

The Superintendent's Management Information Center (M.I.C.) collects and displays data that are useful for analyzing building-level effects, but that are not traditionally available from a single source. Specifically, each January the M.I.C. provides staff and community with a range of data from the previous school year (see attached School Data form). This data is organized around such headings as pupil enrollment data, staff data, achievement, program, and graduate data. The data can provide the following kinds of information.

Student Performance (Outcomes):

- retention rates (by grade)
- results of city-wide test scores (% of items correct, K-8)
- numbers and percent of students receiving course credit (9-12)
- numbers and plans of graduates
- College Board Test--SAT results

Climate Variables:

- principal's length of service (as a principal in the system and as the school's principal)
- teacher turnover rate (numbers of new and incoming teachers)
- instructional staff absence rate
- student daily average attendance rate
- student turnover (admits and dismissals)
- desegregation status
- subsidized transportation status
- suspension and withdrawal rates (to be included in the future)

Student Descriptive Data:

- enrollment by grade, race, and ethnicity
- ESOL/Bilingual program participation
- percent of low income families

77

Program Variables:

- presence of such programs as Chapter 1, early childhood, special education, and vocational education, etc.

The M.I.C. is intended to be the basic stimulus for each school's improvement efforts. The data are considered to be in the public domain, and are intended to be easily accessible to the community. The MIC will be undergoing some future alterations in the presentation of K-8 achievement data. The next edition will present these data with both a local and a nationally normed mean by percentage, by grade.

Priority One Student Performance/Profiles are in the final stages of development. The district will provide Priority One schools with more current information on a quarterly basis, through the profiles, than would be possible through M.I.C. These profiles (see attached two subject-specific profiles) will supply staff with basic classroom monitoring information (e.g., reading book levels, math strands and, in time, indicators of science, social studies, writing levels). Student levels and progress will be represented by the percentage of students achieving mastery in each area and of grades received. Where possible, this achievement data will be broken out by subject matter strand. For example, mathematics achievement data will be broken out into the seven strands of the math curriculum: whole numbers, measurement, fractions, geometry, and problem solving.

In addition, yearly citywide curriculum-referenced achievement test data will be analyzed for each of the schools, and in time, staff will have quarterly summary data on classroom attendance.

The schools that will initially receive these profiles in January 1987 are 26 Priority One schools. These schools also include schools that were involved in earlier school improvement efforts (Replicating Success Schools) and other schools that have 75% or more AFCD students and operate as Chapter 1 School Improvement Projects. Eventually, all the 75 Priority One schools will receive this data.

Rationale:

The rationale for collecting and presenting this kind of data to school staff and community is the belief that:

- schools need regular and comprehensive data-based feedback in order to undertake school improvement efforts
- indicators of school success should include not only achievement data, but climate data as well (e.g., improved student and staff attendance, reduction in staff turnover).
- it is the district's role to supply schools with current and relevant data.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Each of these systems is at a different stage of development. The M.I.C., in its new form, was first released in June 1986. Thus far, feedback on the MIC indicates that the document is being used as intended — to serve as a management resource for school-based long-range planning. Field staff assigned to work with schools on the planning process report the usefulness of this document to that effort. There have been many requests for the document, from both school and community people, as well as from various grant proposal writers. The district has also received several unsolicited letters of praise.

The Priority One School Performance Profile system is not yet operational, but is expected to be shortly.

School/District Context:

In 1985-86, the School District of Philadelphia served 201,445 students in 255 schools. The student population is composed of 25% white, 64% black, 9% Hispanic, and 3% Asian youth. The percent of youth from low income families is 42%, with some schools exceeding 75%.

Resources Needed:

Services: The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation plays a central role in designing ways to provide for the timely release and dissemination of relevant school-based data, and for seeing to the establishment of national and district level norms for school-by-school comparisons.

Historical Perspective:

Both of these efforts, as well as other district data-based efforts have received much of their impetus from the leadership of the Superintendent who was appointed in 1983 and from the push to implement the Modified Desegregation Plan that promised system-wide reforms and a comprehensive school improvement project for 75 of the district's essentially racially isolated low achieving schools. The ability to gather useful and timely data are viewed as essential components of the school improvement effort.

The M.I.C. was first published in 1973-74. Its content and layout are considerably different for the new 1985-86 version. Previously, data had been limited to a column of 10-12 items, with several columns of historical data of the same type (e.g., CAT scores, attendance). In addition, schools would receive only the one page that concerned them, and district superintendents were given only their districts' pages. Internally, the Board of Education members and the Superintendent's Cabinet were given the whole document. The M.I.C. was distributed to the Free Library of Philadelphia, since it was considered to be a public document.

Today's M.I.C. is greatly expanded to include information thought to be essential to the school-based long-range planning effort. The items in the MIC were selected on the basis of a survey of the Board of Education, the Superintendent and her Cabinet that includes District Superintendents. Today, each school as well as interested community groups receive an M.I.C. that includes information on all schools plus district and city summary data. Accessibility to the document has been increased, with copies sent to various parent advocacy groups, special interest groups, and political figures. Copies are still maintained in the Philadelphia Free Libraries.

Contact:

Dr. James H. Lytle
Executive Director
Office of Planning, Research
and Evaluation
(215) 299-7758

For Priority I Information:
Dr. Bill Ross
Priority I District Superintendent
Room #501
(215) 299-8819

Dr. Tom McNamara
Manager, Priority I/Replicating
Success Research and Evaluation Unit
Room #403
(215) 299-7763

For M.I.C. Information:
Edward B. Perry or Cheryl Mason-Dorman
Administrative and Survey Research Services
Room #402
(215) 299-7910

NOTE: All contact persons are at the following address:

Philadelphia School District
21st Street South of the Parkway
Philadelphia, PA 19103

SCHOOL DATA

ADDRESS:	PRINCIPAL:	
	SCHOOL APPOINTMENT DATE: 1986	EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM(S): HEAD START
PHONE:	SYSTEM APPOINTMENT DATE: 1975	
SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1904	SCHOOL CLASSIFICATION: 4	ANNEXES:
HOURS OF OPERATION: 8:45 A.M.- 3:00 P.M.	DESEGREGATION STATUS: NOT DESEGREGATED	
CAPACITY: 1,026		
GRADE ORGANIZATION: PK - 06	SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM(S): EMR LD MG	

PUPIL DATA

PUPIL ENROLLMENT, 1985-86

	TOTAL	AMERICAN INDIAN		BLACK		ASIAN		HISPANIC		WHITE		RETAINED IN GRADE FOR 1985-86		NUMBER PUPILS SUSPENDED	ESOL/ BILINGUAL PROGRAMS		1984-85 WITHDRAWALS			
																	ALL		DROPOUTS	
GRADE	NUMBER	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	1984-85	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
INFANT																				
TODDLER																				
PRE-K	86			86	100															
CHILD CARE KGN.																				
SCH-AGE: PUB.																				
SCH-AGE: NON-PUB.																				
K	81	1	1	78	96	2	2													
1	116			115	99	1	1					16	14							
2	96			96	100							8	8							
3	66			65	98	1	2					6	9							
4	60			58	97			2	3			5	8							
5	66			64	97	1	2	1	2			10	15							
6	69			68	99	1	1													
7																				
8																				
9																				
10																				
11																				
12																				
SPECIAL	40			40	100															
UG/OTHER																				
TOTAL	680	1		670	99	6	1	3				45	7							

STAFF DATA

	AMERICAN INDIAN		BLACK		ASIAN		HISPANIC		WHITE		TOTAL	MALE		FEMALE	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NUMBER	NO.	%	NO.	%
PRINCIPAL							1	100			1	1	100		
VICE-PRINCIPAL															
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT									1	100	1	1	100		
CLASSROOM TEACHERS (REGULAR)			13	52					12	48	25	5	20	20	80
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS			3	50					3	50	6	1	17	5	83
GUIDANCE COUNSELORS			1	100							1			1	100
LIBRARIANS															
TEACHER AIDES			2	100							2			2	100
CLERICAL/SECRETARIES			2	100							2			2	100
CUSTODIANS/SERVICE WORKERS			6	100							6	1	17	5	83
NON-TEACHING ASSISTANTS															
FOOD SERVICE WORKERS			2	100							2	1	50	1	50
OTHER			3	100							3			3	100
HEAD TEACHER									1	100	1			1	100
TEACHERS			2	67					1	33	3			3	100
ASSISTANT TEACHERS															
SOCIAL SERVICE															
AIDES			4	100							4	1	25	3	75
COOK/FOOD SERVICE															
CUSTODIAL/MAINTENANCE															
TOTAL FULL-TIME STAFF			38	69			1	100	17	31	56	11	18	45	[illegible]
TOTAL PART-TIME STAFF									1	100	1			1	[illegible]

NUMBER OF BEGINNING TEACHERS: 0
NUMBER OF TEACHERS NEW TO THIS SCHOOL THIS YEAR: 3

RATE OF ABSENCE (1984-85):
INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF- 4 %
TOTAL STAFF- 4 %

PERCENTAGE OF INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF:
ON OPERATING BUDGET- 68
CATEGORICALLY FUNDED- 32
AT MAXIMUM- 70

PUPIL DATA CONT'D

1984-85

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE: 89.6
TOTAL ADMITS: 140
TOTAL DISMISSALS: 156
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS FROM LOW INCOME FAMILIES: 42.7

1985-86
PUPILS RECEIVING SUBSIDIZED TRANSPORTATION:

TOKENS	SCHOOL BUS
2	24

PROGRAM DATA

CATEGORICAL/OTHER PROGRAM DATA 1985-1986

E.C.I.A. CHAPTER 1
TRANSITION PROGRAM
KINDERGARTEN AIDES
ADOPT-A-SCHOOL PROGRAM

CAREER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

SERVICE AREA	ENROLLMENT
AGRICULTURE	
BUSINESS EDUCATION	
DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION	
HEALTH OCCUPATIONS	
HOME ECONOMICS	
INDUSTRIAL ARTS	
TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION	

ACHIEVEMENT DATA 1984 - 1985

	PERCENT OF ITEMS CORRECT *			
GRADE	MATHEMATICS	READING/ LANGUAGE ARTS	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES
K	68	66		
1	72	64		
2	65	69		
3	64	73		
4	65	68	54	67
5	60	65	48	47
6	57	70	41	50
7				
8				

* NOTE: Entries on this achievement table refer to the percentage of items answered correctly by those who took the test and not to the percentage of students who got the items correct.

GRADE	NUMBER & PERCENT OF PUPILS RECEIVING COURSE CREDIT **							
	ENGLISH		MATHEMATICS		SCIENCE		SOCIAL STUDIES	
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
9								
10								
11								
12								
ADVANCED PLACEMENT								

** NOTE: The number of courses may exceed actual grade enrollment because pupils can take courses at more than one grade level.

COLLEGE BOARD TEST (SAT)	NUMBER TESTED	MEAN SCORES		
		SCHOOL	PA	NATIONAL
VERBAL			428	431
MATH			465	475

GRADUATE DATA

1985 GRADUATES (NUMBERS):

TOTAL NO.	AMER. IND.	BLACK	ASIAN	HISP.	WHITE

1985 GRADUATE PLANS

COLLEGE- 4 YEAR	COLLEGE- 2 YEAR	BUSINESS/TECHNICAL AND OTHER POST GRADUATE TRAINING	MILITARY	EMPLOYMENT	OTHER	UNDECIDED

REPLICATING SUCCESS: SCHOOL PROFILE 1986-87

SUBJECT MATTER AREA: MATHEMATICS

REPORT PERIOD: End of Year

____
No. Name

MATH MASTERY

NUMBER MASTERING
Seven Strands

GRADES/CLASSES	Sys Num	Whole Nos.	Fractions	Measment	Data Int	Geom	Prob Solvg	Average Mastery	Total Pupils	A's N	A's %	B's N	B's %	C's N	C's %	D'S/ F's N	D'S/ F's %
KINDERGARTEN	30	45	32	46	10	28	30	35	90	28	31.11	38	42.22	5	5.56	19	21.11
Teacher #1	10	15	11	21	2	8	10	38	29	10	34.48	13	44.83	2	6.90	4	13.79
Teacher #2	8	16	13	3	5	9	12	31	30	6	20.00	10	33.33	2	6.67	12	40.00
Teacher #3	12	14	8	22	3	11	8	36	31	12	38.71	15	48.39	1	3.23	3	9.68
FIRST GRADE	24	45	30	45	12	23	30	39	77	8	10.39	28	36.36	26	33.77	15	19.48
Teacher #1	8	15	10	15	4	7	10	39	25	2	8.00	10	40.00	9	36.00	4	16.00
Teacher #2	12	16	8	16	3	4	12	42	24	2	8.33	8	33.33	5	20.83	9	37.50
Teacher #3	4	14	12	14	5	12	8	35	28	4	14.29	10	35.71	12	42.86	2	7.14
SECOND GRADE	20	36	25	52	14	16	53	51	61	15	24.59	18	29.51	14	22.95	14	22.95
Teacher #1	10	13	15	20	6	9	30	49	30	8	26.67	9	30.00	6	20.00	7	23.33
Teacher #2	10	23	10	32	8	7	23	52	31	7	22.58	9	29.03	8	25.81	7	22.58
THIRD GRADE	19	33	25	44	18	13	23	44	57	13	22.81	17	29.82	13	22.81	14	24.56
Teacher #1	9	31	10	34	10	10	34	68	29	7	24.14	9	31.03	6	20.69	7	24.14
Teacher #2	10	36	15	54	8	3	11	69	28	6	21.43	8	28.57	7	25.00	7	25.00
FOURTH GRADE	20	35	19	33	13	18	32	43	57	14	24.56	12	21.05	16	28.07	15	26.32
Teacher #1	10	37	9	33	10	8	30	72	27	6	22.22	5	18.52	7	25.93	9	33.33
Teacher #2	10	33	10	33	3	10	33	63	30	8	26.67	7	23.33	9	30.00	6	20.00
FIFTH GRADE	23	39	19	32	16	17	29	42	59	16	27.12	15	25.42	14	23.73	14	23.73
Teacher #1	12	46	7	27	9	7	27	74	26	7	26.92	8	30.77	6	23.08	5	19.23
Teacher #2	11	33	12	36	7	10	30	61	33	9	27.27	7	21.21	8	24.24	9	27.27
SIXTH GRADE	20	33	19	31	18	22	36	42	61	13	21.31	15	24.59	16	26.23	17	27.87
Teacher #1	10	32	10	32	8	11	35	64	31	8	25.81	7	22.58	9	29.03	7	22.58
Teacher #2	10	33	9	30	10	11	37	67	30	5	16.67	8	26.67	7	23.33	10	33.33
TOTAL SCHOOL	156	266	169	284	101	137	232	42	462	107	23.16	143	30.95	104	22.51	108	23.38

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REPLICATING SUCCESS: SCHOOL PROFILE 1986-87

SUBJECT MATTER AREA: READING

REPORT PERIOD: End of Year

No. Name

	GRADE LEVEL INDICATOR																	
	MORE THAN 1YR BELOW		1/2- 1YR: BELOW GR.		AT/ABOVE GR.LEVEL		1 YEAR'S GROWTH EXPECTED		TOTAL # STUDENTS	A's		B's		C's		D'S/ F's	
GRADES/CLASSES	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	TOTAL	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
KINDERGARTEN	30	33.33	32	35.56	28	31.11	58	64.44	90	28	31.11	38	42.22	5	5.56	19	21.11
Teacher #1	10	34.48	11	37.93	8	27.59	19	65.52	29	10	34.48	13	44.83	2	6.90	4	13.79
Teacher #2	8	26.67	13	43.33	9	30.00	19	63.33	30	6	20.00	10	33.33	2	6.67	12	40.00
Teacher #3	12	38.71	8	25.81	11	35.48	20	64.52	31	12	38.71	15	48.39	1	3.23	3	9.68
FIRST GRADE	24	31.17	30	38.96	23	29.87	42	54.55	77	8	10.39	28	36.36	26	33.77	15	19.48
Teacher #1	8	32.00	10	40.00	7	28.00	14	56.00	25	2	8.00	10	40.00	9	36.00	4	16.00
Teacher #2	12	50.00	8	33.33	4	16.67	14	58.33	24	2	8.33	8	33.33	5	20.83	9	37.50
Teacher #3	4	14.29	12	42.86	12	42.86	14	50.00	28	4	14.29	10	35.71	12	42.86	2	7.14
SECOND GRADE	20	32.79	25	40.98	16	26.23	24	39.34	61	15	24.59	18	29.51	14	22.95	14	22.95
Teacher #1	10	33.33	15	50.00	9	30.00	12	40.00	30	8	26.67	9	30.00	6	20.00	7	23.33
Teacher #2	10	32.26	10	32.26	7	22.58	12	38.71	31	7	22.58	9	29.03	8	25.81	7	22.58
THIRD GRADE	19	33.33	25	43.86	13	22.81	28	49.12	57	13	22.81	17	29.82	13	22.81	14	24.56
Teacher #1	9	31.03	10	34.48	10	34.48	14	48.28	29	7	24.14	9	31.03	6	20.69	7	24.14
Teacher #2	10	35.71	15	53.57	3	10.71	14	50.00	28	6	21.43	8	28.57	7	25.00	7	25.00
FOURTH GRADE	20	35.09	19	33.33	18	31.58	30	52.63	57	14	24.56	12	21.05	16	28.07	15	26.32
Teacher #1	10	37.04	9	33.33	8	29.63	15	55.56	27	6	22.22	5	18.52	7	25.93	9	33.33
Teacher #2	10	33.33	10	33.33	10	33.33	15	50.00	30	8	26.67	7	23.33	9	30.00	6	20.00
FIFTH GRADE	23	38.98	19	32.20	17	28.81	30	50.85	59	16	27.12	15	25.42	14	23.73	14	23.73
Teacher #1	12	46.15	7	26.92	7	26.92	15	57.69	26	7	26.92	8	30.77	6	23.08	5	19.23
Teacher #2	11	33.33	12	36.36	10	30.30	15	45.45	33	9	27.27	7	21.21	8	24.24	9	27.27
SIXTH GRADE	20	32.79	19	31.15	22	36.07	30	49.18	61	13	21.31	15	24.59	16	26.23	17	27.87
Teacher #1	10	32.26	10	32.26	11	35.48	15	48.39	31	8	25.81	7	22.58	9	29.03	7	22.58
Teacher #2	10	33.33	9	30.00	11	36.67	15	50.00	30	5	16.67	8	26.67	7	23.33	10	33.33
TOTAL SCHOOL	156	33.77	169	36.58	137	29.65	242	52.38	462	107	23.16	143	30.95	104	22.51	108	23.38

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PITTSBURGH AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Computer Assisted Professional (CAP)

School/District Involvement

- Pittsburgh Area School District
- Martin Luther King Elementary School
- Brookline Elementary School and Teacher Center

Grades: K-5

Project Start-up: September 1984

Purpose:

To provide professionals with a computer-assisted information system to help them identify students needing attention and to help them to plan and implement instructional improvement activities.

Target Population:

Students at risk of not achieving instructional goals.

Description:

The Computer Assisted Professional (CAP) project is a developmental system designed to help school staff: (1) monitor student achievement, (2) monitor attendance, and (3) provide homerooms with scheduling and home information (name, address, phone, emergency contact information, etc.). The CAP system contains the following information for each student:

- name
- date of birth
- present grade
- present homeroom
- grades repeated
- curriculum and/or school year being repeated
- Chapter 1 services (reading, mathematics, language arts), number served and performance
- reading level — current (at beginning of school year)
- pacing in the reading program through the school year (updated monthly)
- absenteeism — 1 year back (updated monthly)
- rate of tardiness (updated monthly)
- in-school and out-of-school suspensions (updated monthly)
- report card grades — all subjects (final grades of the previous school year and the four marking periods of current year)
- MAP results — reading, mathematics, language arts (science to be added)
- for each MAP subject area — previous year's results (mastery is set at 80% for reading and language arts; for math, must pass 16 of 20 objectives)
- CAT results (national percentiles and previous two years for reading, mathematics and language arts (purged every 2 years)
- Kindergarten AKI scores — inventory for Chapter 1 identification

Currently, most of the information listed above is being typed into the system by a special project staff person. The one exception is the student responses on the MAP tests. These are processed through a computer-linked optical scanner; the computer scores the responses and provides summary reports of student achievement on specific MAP objectives.

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Data are generated in reports by individual, classroom, and school-wide results. The principal sends these reports to teachers for analysis to identify how content and instruction can be adapted to meet students' needs. Data can be grouped by individual, grade, homeroom, and school; and/or by individual objectives. Another feature of CAP is a built-in query system providing staff with the ability to pose relational questions, such as "how many 3rd grade students, with an absenteeism rate of 15% or more, have a reading level 1 year or more below grade level" or, "how many 5th grade students, with a high in-school and/or out-of-school suspension rate, have repeated one or more years?"

Rationale:

District and school staff believe that achievement data, made available on a real-time basis, are a critical element in instructional planning to improve student achievement.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

The CAP project has been under development for two years (1984-86). There is evidence that CAP, by making available complete and timely data, has had an effect at the building level on the school organization, curriculum planning, staff allocation of time, and student attendance.

In the Martin Luther King Elementary School, data are used to group and regroup students for instructional purposes. Teaching staff have instituted team teacher meetings, a half hour prior to the start of the school day, where CAP data and classroom observations are shared and instructional plans are formulated for each student.

At the Brookline Elementary School and Teacher Center, school staff used CAP data to solve an attendance problem. A number of students were sporadically missing school. Using CAP, staff looked at their attendance records and the individual student profiles and found that all the students came from the same location — living almost within blocks of one another. The school found that only one school bus passed through that area, and if students missed it, they had no other means of getting to school. Consequently, the school changed the bus route and schedule to accommodate those students. The attendance problem ended.

Both district and school staff feel that they are just beginning to tap the potential uses of CAP in tracking achievement, in supporting diagnostic data-based decision-making, and in planning strategies for improvement.

School Context:

The Pittsburgh Area School District serves approximately 40,274 students comprised of approximately 23% Black, 20% Chinese, 17% White, 17% Hispanic, 12% other non-white, and 11% other Asian.

Resources Needed:

Staff:	To update and maintain the system, and to design a variety of report formats requires an experienced programmer. (Currently, staff from the Learning Resource and Development Center (LRDC) perform these functions.)
Training:	District and school staff need to be trained to retrieve information from the system, to broaden the access to data to individual teachers. Staff need training in how to interpret the data to facilitate its accurate use in planning.
Equipment:	Currently, one computer serves each school's needs. As the system becomes institutionalized, additional terminals may become necessary to facilitate access. (Currently, the computer and related software has been provided by LRDC.)
Funding:	The current system was provided at no cost to the district/schools. A grant received by LRDC funded the CAP project. Costs for replication are not currently available.

Historical Perspective:

CAP is a cooperative developmental project between the Pittsburgh Area School District and the Learning Resource and Development Center (LRDC) of the University of Pittsburgh.

In June of 1980, the superintendent established a three pronged program to improve Pittsburgh schools. The first prong was PRISM, a teacher training program based on the Madeline Hunter instructional model. The second was MAP (Monitoring Achievement in Pittsburgh) tests, designed by the district to measure student achievement against a set of learning objectives. Finally, came SIP (school improvement program). In essence, PRISM looks at "how they teach," MAP looks at "what they teach", and SIP looks at "why they do the other two and how that affects student achievement."

The superintendent, who has a strong belief that higher education should be involved with basic schooling, involved LRDC in the district's school improvement programs. The district identified seven schools through SIP, based on achievement data, to receive assistance. The first curriculum area to be examined was reading. When district and LRDC staff attempted to review and use the reading test data (Ginn reading program) to inform instructional planning, they found that the data available was not in a usable form, and there was just too much data to score, record, and synthesize. In addition, the district's existing tests had to be scored by hand and required two weeks turn around time. Given the fact that the need for accurate, timely data was crucial to the long-term goals of the school improvement program to use the data to inform instructional decision-making, they concluded only a computer could manage the volumes of data that would be assessed, over time. LRDC staff wrote a grant to a private foundation, were funded, and proceeded to set up the CAP project. Currently, all information entered into and received from the system is done by LRDC staff. The goal this year is for district/school staff to begin to receive training on how to maintain the system and retrieve information, as needed.

This effort is still developmental. Additional information and experience is still being gathered to determine maintenance and replication needs.

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SECTION IV

APPROACHES FOR ACHIEVING SUCCESS WITH STUDENTS AT RISK

This section provides educators with a framework for comparing approaches that schools are trying in order to become more successful with students at risk.

It also provides examples of practices and programs Pennsylvania schools and districts are trying in order to improve their success with students at risk.

A Framework for Comparing School Approaches

The framework for describing alternative approaches and related practices for students at risk is summarized in Figure IV-1. It has five sections.

Scope of Problem

Data may suggest that the problem involves a small number of students — each of whom appear to be an isolated case. For instance, a pre-kindergarten child fails to demonstrate on a diagnostic battery certain language skills expected of five-year olds, a third grade student is continually being referred to the principal for disrupting classes, a high achieving seventh grade student appears listless in class and fails to complete a number of assignments, or an eleventh grade student informs the principal that his father lost his job and he is dropping out of school to help earn money for the family.

Data may suggest that the problem involves a specific group of students. For instance, a group of elementary students from a particular neighborhood appear to be absent more often than their classmates; a group of third grade students do poorly on a set of items on Pennsylvania's Test of Essential Language and Literacy Skills; a group of middle-school students from a particular neighborhood show little interest in school, do not participate in after school activities, and generally receive low grades; or a small group of high school girls have become pregnant or have a baby to care for.

Data may suggest that the problem affects or has the potential to affect most of the student body. For instance, students from one of the four elementary schools in a district consistently perform lower on a standardized achievement test administered annually by the district; one of the two middle schools in a district requires $35,000 in repairs due to vandalism, in contrast to $7,000 in repairs at the other middle school; or a significant number of eleventh grade students report on the Health section of Pennsylvania's Educational Quality Assessment that they regularly drink alcoholic beverages.

Figure IV-1

A Framework for Approaches Schools Are Implementing to Be More Successful With Students At Risk

1. Scope of Problem

- Individual students
- Groups of students
- Most students

2. Strategies

- Student-oriented
- Environment-oriented
- Combination of student and environment-oriented strategies

3. Objectives

- Improve student perception of school, teachers, and themselves
- Strengthen student commitment to conventional social goals, roles, norms, activities
- Improve student attendance
- Improve student behavior
- Improve student achievement

4. Domains for Action

- Curriculum
- Instruction
- Teacher expectations, behavior, and role
- Incentives
- Peer culture
- Family support
- Special services
- School organization

5. Outside Resources

- Law enforcement agencies
- Mental health agencies
- Welfare agencies
- Community service agencies
- Youth groups
- Business and business-related groups
- Churches

Strategies

There are three basic strategies. The first strategy is based on the assumption that the problem resides within the individual student. It involves the use of student-oriented interventions — for example, providing counseling for a student, developing a behavioral contract with a student, or requiring a student to repeat a grade.

The second strategy is based on the assumption that the problem resides in the students' environment — that is, their home, school, peer group, or community. It involves the use of environment-oriented interventions — for example, developing an after-school program to ensure that all students have an adult-supervised place to go between 3 and 6 p.m., restructuring the secondary school into teams of teachers and students that are designed to provide a more personalized environment for all students, or developing with business and community leaders a program that ensures that all students from poor families, who successfully complete the pre-college program at the high school, will be provided the financial assistance (through scholarships and provision of part-time employment) that is needed for them to attend one of the state universities.

The third strategy combines the other two. It is based on the assumption that the problem resides in the interaction between students and their environments. It involves the use of both student-oriented and environment-oriented interventions — for example, a drug prevention program that involves parents, family members, and community groups as active supporters; that is an integral part of a K-12 health curriculum required of all students and helps students not only acquire knowledge, but also useful habits and coping skills; that involves all school staff in noticing changes in students' behavior that may suggest that particular students are in need of personalized assistance; and that provides counseling and other special services to students needing help.

The selection of a strategy is influenced by the scope of the problem, the availability of resources, and the extent to which local leaders and staff have a shared vision of what might be possible.

Objectives

The research reviewed uses a variety of indicators to assess school effects (see Section II). These indicators can be restated as objectives that, if accomplished, would make schools more effective with students at risk.

- Improve student perception of:
  - their school (e.g., to perceive the school as an important and stimulating place that can help them achieve their future goals)
  - their teachers (e.g., to perceive their teachers as wanting to help them succeed in school and as having high expectations for what they do)
  - themselves (e.g., to perceive themselves as being able to learn and succeed in school, and as being responsible for their success and their future).
- Strengthen student commitment (bonds) to conventional:
  - social goals (e.g., to graduate from school; to adopt a career; to contribute to the betterment of one's community, nation, and world; to contribute to the development of a new generation)
  - social roles (e.g., to recognize and accept the responsibilities of various roles such as student, worker, community member, citizen, parent)
  - social rules and norms (e.g., to obey the law, accept the will of the majority, protect the rights of minorities, and resolve conflicts without resorting to violence)
  - social activities (e.g., to value learning, working, playing in groups, and developing relationships with others).
- Improve student attendance in school and classes, including punctuality.
- Improve student skills in behaving in a cooperative and socially responsible way (e.g., commitment to conventional social rules and norms).
- Improve student achievement (e.g., to increase the extent to which students complete learning tasks and assignments, to increase the level of success students experience on daily learning tasks and assignments, to improve the strategies students employ to achieve specific learning outcomes).

Possible Domains for Action

Research suggests the types of changes that school staff can make to be more successful with students at risk (see Section II). These have been grouped under eight possible domains in which local educators can act. Most approaches involve several of these domains.

- Curriculum. In Pennsylvania, the curriculum is defined by the Twelve Goals of Quality Education, by planned courses and co-curricular activities, and by the instructional materials used.

  The research and its underlying theories (see Section II) place a particular emphasis on four goals for students at risk: to develop student commitment to conventional social goals, roles, rules, and activities. Failure to achieve these goals can lead students to adopt self-destructive behaviors.

  In considering the domain of curriculum for possible action, teachers and administrators answer such questions as the following.

  — How well does our curriculum help students to become committed to achieving conventional social goals?

  — How well does our curriculum help students prepare for conventional social roles?

  — How well does our curriculum help students accept and act in accordance with conventional rules and norms?

  — How well does our curriculum help students value the rewards of conventional social activities?

- Instruction. This domain is concerned with all of the actions a teacher takes to help students achieve the objectives of a school's curriculum. It includes planning lessons and units, creating conditions to facilitate student learning, monitoring student achievement, and revising instructional plans and classroom activities based on student success.

  Research has demonstrated that the quality of instruction influences students' perceptions of themselves as students, their behavior in class and the level of their achievement.

  In considering this domain for possible action, teachers and administrators answer such questions as the following.

  — How well do we use the information about what our students know and can do when we are developing our instructional plans?

  — How well do we communicate to students our interest and respect for what they know and can do?

  — How well do we communicate the objectives of our lessons and make clear their relationship to what students know and can do?

  — How well do we demonstrate or explain what is to be learned?

  — How often do we provide students with an opportunity to practice what is to be learned?

  — How well do we provide students with feedback on their work?

  — How often do we use peer or cross-age tutors to help students learn?

  — How often do we incorporate cooperative learning strategies into our lessons?

  — How often do we incorporate experiental learning strategies into our lessons?

  — How often do we incorporate mastery learning strategies into our lessons?

  — How willing are we to adjust our instructional plans and activities to meet the learning needs of students?

- Teacher expectations, behaviors and role definitions. This domain is concerned with what teachers expect of their students, how they attend to and interact with them, and how broadly they define their role in the teacher-student relationship.

  Research has demonstrated that what teachers expect of students and how they interact with students affects students' self-perceptions, their development of social bonds, their behavior, and their acquisition of knowledge and skills.

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In considering this domain for possible action, teachers and administrators answer such questions as the following.

- — How high are our expectations for all students concerning behavior and achievement?
- — How well do we communicate our expectations to students and reflect these expectations in daily interactions with them?
- — How well do we respond quickly and consistently to inappropriate student behavior, without denigrating students?
- — How well do we attend to and involve each student in class activities?
- — How well do we attend to problems that students may be having outside of the classroom, such as with other teachers, peers, or family?

- Incentives. This domain is concerned with the recognition and rewards that students experience for behaving in certain ways. Ideally, behaving in accordance with conventional goals, roles, and norms should be its own intrinsic reward; however, frequently such behavior is first learned through experience of extrinsic rewards.

Research suggests that careful use of recognition and rewards influence both student behavior and achievement. However, it also suggests that care must be exercised in the use of extrinsic rewards so that students come to understand that learning and behaving in socially responsible ways can be its own reward. Research also suggests that the challenge for staff is to make the school experience rewarding for all students.

In considering this domain for possible action, teachers and administrators answer such questions as the following.

- — How well do we help students to learn how intrinsically rewarding learning can be (e.g., mastering a skill, understanding a concept, solving a problem, completing a difficult assignment)?
- — How well do we help students learn how intrinsically rewarding being a contributing member of a school community can be?
- — How well do we make the school experience rewarding for all students?
- — How well do we recognize and reward both individual and group achievement and contributions?

- Peer Culture. This domain is concerned with the goals, norms, and values of students as peers.

Research suggests that, particularly during the secondary school year, the peer culture can influence what students focus their energies on and how they behave. Research also suggests that school staff can actively work to help students adopt the schools' goals, norms, and values as part of their culture.

In considering this domain for possible action, teachers and administrators answer such questions as the following.

- — How well do we communicate our goals to all students and involve them in setting their own short- and long-term goals within that framework?
- — How well do we involve students in helping each other achieve school goals and objectives — for example, involving them as peer or cross-age tutors or through the use of cooperative learning strategies?
- — How well do we communicate our expectations for behavior, help all students learn how to meet those expectations, and involve students in the processes of maintaining and reinforcing what is expected?
- — How well do we involve students in the governance and operation of the school, providing them opportunities to contribute to the quality of school life and to assume social responsibilities?

- Family Support. This domain is concerned with the extent to which students, parents, and other family members understand and actively support school goals, norms, programs, and activities.

Research suggests parental and family interest in school and active support of its goals, norms, programs, and activities can contribute to children's self-perception, attendance, behavior, and achievement. Research also documents the many barriers that stand in the way of school and family partnerships — particularly with families of students at risk. Yet research also documents how personal contacts, home visitations, and parent support groups as well as the more traditional parent conferences, home and school meetings, and use of parents as volunteers can overcome many of those barriers.

In considering this domain for possible action, teachers and administrators answer such questions as the following.

— How well do we communicate our goals, norms, programs, and activities to parents and family members?

— How well do we form an active partnership with all of our parents/family members — a partnership based on a sharing of perspectives and on the development of shared understandings and priorities?

— How well do we provide parents/family members of students at risk with concrete suggestions and materials that they can use to help their children succeed in school?

- Special Services. This domain is concerned with special services that schools provide students beyond the regular program and the established guidance and academic counseling program. Many of these services may result from collaborative efforts of schools and other community agencies. These services can include:

— academic tutoring programs and homework "help lines"

— expanded counseling services for students using alcohol and drugs, students prone to being disruptive, students trying to cope with stress or feelings of depression

— health services for students who are sexually active or who have babies to care for

— day-care services for students with babies

— structured afterschool programs for students whose parents work and would therefore be unsupervised.

Research suggests that such services provided early can help students cope successfully with specific problems. By working to provide such services, schools can also demonstrate their commitment to helping all students succeed.

In considering this domain for action, teachers and administrators answer such questions as the following.

— How well are our students obtaining the services they will need in order to attend successfully to school tasks?

— How well are we working with parents and other community agencies to fill the gaps in the types of services that our students need?

- School Organization. This domain is concerned with the way schools are organized: how teachers and students are assigned, how time is scheduled, and how class size is determined.

Research has demonstrated that the way schools are organized can affect what is taught, the quality of instruction, the quality of relationships that develop between students and teacher and among students as peers, the involvement of families and the provision of special services.

In considering this domain for possible action, teachers and administrators answer such questions as the following.

— How well does our school's organization facilitate the implementation of a curriculum that helps students become committed to conventional social goals, roles, rules and norms, and activities?

— How well does our school's organization help teachers implement effective instructional practices?

— How well does our school's organization facilitate the development of personal relationships between students and staff?

— How well does our school's organization facilitate the use of peers in support of school goals?

— How well does our school's organization facilitate communication with and involvement of the family in support of school goals?

— How well does our school's organization facilitate the provision of special services to individual students?

Outside Resources

Finally, an approach can involve outside resources — resources beyond the peer group and the family. These resources can frequently help school staffs design and implement programs. Usually, they help to extend the impact of a school-based program. Examples of such outside resources are law enforcement agencies, mental health agencies, health agencies, welfare agencies, community service groups, child care agencies, churches, businesses, and business-related groups.

Examples of Practices and Programs in Pennsylvania Schools

The following pages describe examples of the efforts of Pennsylvania schools and districts to be more successful with students at risk.

They range from small scale, individual student-oriented programs (e.g., Program for Alienated Youth) to comprehensive programs involving many community groups and affecting the structure of schools (e.g., Cities-in-Schools). The examples include ones from urban, rural, and suburban districts, and they include efforts directed at all age groups (e.g., kindergarten and elementary to high school students).

These examples were identified with the help of state and Intermediate Unit staff. They are meant to be illustrative and suggestive. It is hoped that they will stimulate other school districts to share what they are doing to be more successful with students at risk (see Overview). It is also hoped that the current set of examples will give other districts ideas regarding approaches that they might take.

Each description was developed through one or more telephone interviews. It was then reviewed by the district contact person for accuracy. Each description has at the top of its first page a list of descriptors that reflect the framework presented earlier in this section. It then provides information on: (1) the purpose of the program, (2) the target audience, (3) a description of major components, (4) the rationale, (5) the evidence available regarding the effectiveness of the system, (6) the school context, (7) the resources needed, (8) the history of its development, and (9) the name of a contact person (as of the fall of 1986).

To help the reader to identify programs of most interest, Figure IV-2 provides a list of the program titles in the order that they appear, the grades for which the approach may be applicable (this is usually greater than the grade span served by the current program), and the domains for action, at the school level, most affected by the program.

In reading these descriptions, be sure to note that these are frequently multi-year efforts that require significant time before they begin having notable effects.

Figure IV-2

Examples of Approaches

Program		Domains for Action							
	Grade-level Applicability	Curriculum	Instruction	Teacher Expectations, Behavior and Roles	Incentives	Peer Culture	Family Support	Special Support	School Organization
Absentee Prevention Program	K-8				●		●	●	
Adopt-A-Student Program	K-12			●	●				
Alternative Education Program	6-12		●	●	●				
Cities-In-Schools	5-12	●			●		●	●	●
Coping Skills Among Young Adolescents	6-8	●	●			●			
Gettysburg Adolescent Parenting Program	9-12	●			●		●	●	●
Neighborhood Improvement and Youth Employment Project	K-12	●		●	●	●			
Philadelphia High School Academies Program	9-12	●			●		●	●	
Pre-Referral Teacher Assistance Program	K-12		●	●			●		
Prevention of Early Academic Failure Program	K-6	●	●	●					●
Program for Alienated Youth	K-12						●	●	
School Health Curriculum Project	K-9	●		●			●	●	
Team Accelerated Instruction	K-8	●	●	●	●	●			
Truancy Intervention Program	5-12						●	●	

Strategy

- Student and Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem

- Groups of Students

Domains for Action

- Family support
- Special services
- Incentives

Agencies Involved

- K-4 Elementary Schools (2)
- Community College
- Mental Health Agencies
- Health agencies

Absentee Prevention Program
Big Beaver Falls Area School District/Community College of Beaver County

(applicable to elementary through junior high)

Purpose:

The Absentee Prevention Program attempts to apply innovative strategies for providing prevention and early intervention services for elementary children who are chronically absent or tardy from school.

Target Audience:

The primary target audience for this program are K-4 students who have been absent for unexplained reasons 15 or more days during the previous year, and have begun to show similar patterns in the current year. In these particular schools, 50% of these students are in kindergarten and first grade.

Description:

The first phase of the program is the identification of the chronic absentee. A systematic approach that includes a review of attendance records and staff and teacher observations, provides most referrals. Staff is encouraged to observe students for indicators of potential absenteeism problems, such as: frequent tardiness, lack of success in school (academic and social), frequent ridicule from classmates, anxiety about entering school or classroom, antagonism toward school, physical appearance, significant events in a child's life (e.g., divorce, parent's loss of job, etc.), negative parental attitude toward school (e.g., history of sibling or parental dropouts, failure to send excuses for child's absences, complaints by child that no one will walk him to school).

The second phase involves having the program's Prevention Specialist assess the child's needs, learn about the child's personality, health, home life, emotional stability, attitude toward school, and so forth; and establish rapport with the child. A variety of effective strategies have been designed by the project for this purpose. Rapport with the parent is established through phone calls and home visits.

The third phase involves planning a course of action and intervention with the child, the teacher, and family. The program recognizes that absenteeism can be due to multiple problems; so a combination of strategies may be tried. Various causes are recognized; family problems, social/emotional problems, academic frustration or school refusal, parental drug and/or alcohol abuse. Intervention strategies facilitated by the Prevention Specialist and school personnel include the following.

Working with Parents

- conduct home visits
- assist parents in networking with human service agencies
- plan parenting sessions
- provide moral support (e.g., taking parents to meetings, making phone calls, taking a parent to the hospital for detoxification, offering positive reinforcement)
- provide liaison service between home and school

Working with the Student

- monitor daily attendance
- provide individual one-on-one counseling
- provide support group sessions (e.g., how to cope with their emotions, how to take care of themselves, building self-esteem, reducing stress)

- refer children to Pre-Alateen meetings (designed by Alcoholics Anonymous to to help young children cope with parental drinking problems)
- secure tutoring
- provide weekly attendance awards

Working with the School

- identify a staff member to act as in-school support person
- design student behavior modification plan with teacher, when necessary
- facilitate steady communication between all personnel working with child (teacher, counselors, health and social service agencies)
- provide prevention sessions for all students (e.g., coping with anger and worry, becoming chemically aware) with teachers providing follow-up activities
- provide teacher in-service (e.g., "Children of alcoholics")
- circulate relevant curriculum materials

Rationale:

The operating philosophy behind the Absentee Prevention Project is based on three major premises:

- absentee problems should be addressed early, before they become too ingrained to reverse
- chronic absenteeism in the primary grades may be directly related to family problems, including parental drug and alcohol abuse
- effective absenteeism programs require communication and support between the home and the school, with someone assigned the role of Prevention Specialist serving as a facilitator or team leader in the process.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Between September 1981 and May 1984, the Prevention Specialist worked with 146 children — 86% of whom improved their attendance. Of the students who could be traced through two or more consecutive years of the program, results were equally significant: 80% showed a 10% or better improvement in attendance after intervention.

A careful statistical analysis of data of both elementary schools reveals that attendance improved with each successive year of intervention. There were significantly lower percentages of unexcused absences that occurred during the second year of intervention compared to the first.

Other less quantifiable results were even more gratifying: a six-year-old outcast stopped hating himself; a frightened, withdrawn seven-year-old learned how to trust someone; an illiterate mother learned how to read and write; and an alcoholic father developed the courage to attend his first AA meeting. Staff had observed that the siblings of chronic absentees also benefit from the program's effects.

The program was accepted as a 1983-85 demonstration model for the Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Pennsylvania Department of Health. It has been targeted for replication in five additional school districts in Pennsylvania during the 1986-87 school year.

School/Community Context:

Big Beaver Falls is a racially mixed, economically depressed urban area in western Pennsylvania. With over 12,000 residents, it is one of the most populous areas in Beaver County. Being largely dependent on heavy industry, it has also been one of those areas hardest hit by the recession. Chronic unemployment (20%) and its accompanying side effects (divorce, drug and alcohol abuse) has contributed to an absentee problem in the district of over 2,500 students. Minority students comprise 17% of the district's student population.

Resources Needed:

Staffing: The Prevention Specialist assigned to work at the building level is essential to this program. This person works directly with children, parents and teachers, and is generally a teacher with special training (e.g., drug and alcohol prevention, children of alcoholics, human service networking).

Training: The core team of educators involved in planning this program may require special training in such areas as making effective home visits, when and how to make referrals, finding and working with community resources, drug and alcohol education, parenting programs, and so forth.

Materials: Districts interested in replicating this model should purchase the training manual: Community College of Beaver County Absentee Prevention Project: A Program That Works ($13.00).

Historical Perspective:

The Absenteeism Prevention Program was developed by the Community College of Beaver County (CCBC) as a response to an ad hoc committee, the Beaver County Chronic Absenteeism Task Force, made up of citizens and professionals interested in studying students identified as truants. The Task Force recommended that the ongoing Prevention Project (a drug and alcohol prevention program located in CCBC) submit a proposal to Beaver County Children and Youth Services for Pennsylvania Act 148 funds to implement an absentee prevention program. From January 1980 to July 1981, the initial pilot program was implemented in the Freedom Area School District (target population: grades 5-7). After it was revised and expanded, the program was transferred to the Big Beaver Falls School District. The urban setting and larger target population in Big Beaver Falls were more conducive to the program's objective of meeting the needs of the urban child. As a result of the findings from the pilot project in the Freedom School District, the program was also modified to focus on a target population of grades K-4.

It had been ascertained that 65% (up from 46%) of the absences in the area were due to confirmed drug and alcohol abuse by the parents (parent admitted for treatment, arrested or cited for driving while intoxicated).

To date, this program has been replicated in Rochester School District and will become part of five other districts' efforts: Allentown, Altoona, Lancaster, Clairton, and McKeesport. This has been made possible through the support of PDE; the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Drug and Alcohol Programs; the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency; and the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Mental Health Division.

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Strategy

- Student and Environment Oriented

Scope of Problem

- Group of Students

Domains for Action

- Teacher/Staff role
- Incentives

Agencies Involved

- High School (1)

Adopt-A-Student Program
Schenley High School
Pittsburgh Area School District

(applicable K-12)

Purpose:

The goal of Schenley's Adopt-A-Student Program is to personalize the school experience for some youth by providing intensive one-on-one staff/student interactions.

Target Audience:

This program targets those students who may be earning passing grades, but who remain unattached, withdrawn, and isolated from the mainstream of school activities. They are students who may have occasional academic or behavioral difficulties, or who may be in danger of not completing high school because they are uncommitted and uninterested in the goals of school. Individual staff members select their "adoptee" on the basis of a perceived mutual affinity, "those kids who seem to hang around one staff person more than others."

Description:

The Adopt-A-Student Program is designed to pair a staff member with one or more students with whom they are to maintain nearly daily contact. The purpose of this contact is, first and foremost, to be a listener for the student. They are to demonstrate a special interest and concern for the welfare of the student, they are to be an advocate for the student, interceding when necessary. In this role, the staff person:

- acts as a cheerleader for the student's efforts at school, at home, and in the community
- demonstrates a real and personal interest in the student's concerns and aspirations
- speaks on the student's behalf to her/his teachers or other administrators, if necessary.

Staff find the time to play this role by engaging in the following activities, specifically, they:

- have lunch together, served by the school's lunch service
- send the student a flower on "Flower Day"
- go to basketball games together
- give the student a ticket to the school play
- transport the student to school for special activities.

The first year's efforts (1985-86) involved about 25 staff and 25 students. Staff members included teachers, the principal and other administrators, counselors, the school social worker, and the school custodian. This year (1986-87) the effort is being considerably expanded.

Some staff resistance focused on the mistaken belief that they would have to play a therapeutic, psychoanalytic role in the relationship. In fact, staff are not expected to play this role. Instead, they are to encourage students to meet with the counselors and school social worker when in need of specific counseling interventions or on topic areas where the staff person does not feel comfortable (e.g. issues concerning sex education).

Rationale:

Schenley High School staff believe that the Adopt-A-Student Program benefits both students and staff in the following ways.

- The development of a close staff/student relationship can increase student self-esteem, as well as commitment to school norms and activities.
- The encouragement of strong personal relationships between staff and student is critical in reducing the anonymity of the school experience for both.
- The teachers can influence students' level of involvement in school, especially through the establishment of close personal relationships.
- The teachers can be more effective with more students as they assume this role.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Currently, the Adopt-A-Student Program is very small, and most of the evidence of success is based on staff observations. Staff report that their adoptees responded in positive ways to the establishment of these relationships and that these students have remained in school by the year's end. In addition, many more staff have volunteered for this role in the second year of the program.

As the program reaches more students at Schenley, evidence of effectiveness might begin to be visible in their school climate assessment.

School/Community Context:

Schenley High School is located in Pittsburgh, and serves a population of 1,000 comprised of 65% black, .5% Hispanic, 34.5% Asian, and others. Students eligible for a free or reduced lunch comprise 65% of the student body.

Resources Needed:

Funding:	This is a very low cost program. A special grant from the Allegheny Conference provides staff with enough money to take a student to lunch, plan group picnics, and provide for any other needs that might otherwise come out of a staff member's pocket.
Time:	Staff may want to allot some time during the year to discuss the goals of the program and to keep each other informed regarding ideas and insights that could aid their colleagues.

Historical Perspective:

The primary impetus for this program came from the results of the school climate surveys over the last three years, conducted by the district's research department and the Learning Resource and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh. These surveys repeatedly indicated that students felt a lack of ownership for their school, that school was an impersonal institution.

With the data repeatedly pointing to this area for attention, staff decided to address the problem in a direct way. Two key factors led to this particular strategy: the personal experience of the principal, and a teacher's special efforts. The principal had a very positive experience in a previous school when he assumed this role with one particular student. The ties that eventually developed between the principal, the student and his family continue to this day. The concept of a more formal "Adopt-A-Student" program was initiated through one teacher's leadership efforts.

Now in its second year, the program has already made some important changes. The original target, in the first few months, was a small group of female students who were experiencing behavior problems. Almost immediately the circle of students was expanded to include students who were not in any trouble. There was the concern that the program would be identified as being targeted for "problem students", and that such a label would defeat the program's good intentions. The circle of adopted students is being continually expanded to meet the diverse needs of the student population.

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Strategy

- Student and Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem

- Groups of Students

Domains for Action

- School organization
- Instruction
- Incentives
- Teacher expectations, behavior, and role

Agencies Involved

- Alternative Education Sites (2)
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- Welfare Agencies
- Social Service Agencies

Alternative Education Program
Lycoming County, Williamsport

(applicable to middle-high school)

Purpose:

The Lycoming County Alternative Education Program (AEP) operates an academic instructional program in two sites for disruptive and delinquent youth. AEP's objective is to insure that 60% of their students complete a secondary education program by the time they reach age 21. For those for whom obtaining a diploma is not a realistic goal, AEP's goal is to help them become tax payers through referrals to jobs or job training.

Target Audience:

Any student enrolled in a junior high, middle, or high school in the eight cooperating school districts must be referred to AEP by the school, and may also be referred by the court. Eligible students include disruptive youth, and adjudicated or dependent youth assigned by the court to the Day Treatment Center, a county facility. Students must apply and sign a contract for admission to AEP. Once admitted, they must meet certain attendance and other behavioral goals to remain in the program. Students denied admission or ejected from the program are placed in other settings by appropriate school or court authorities.

Description:

AEP operates an intensive, individualized academic coaching program at its main facility in the Williamsport Schools administration building and at an auxiliary facility in the County's Day Treatment Center for adjudicated and dependent youth. The program's capacity is from 60 to 65 students in both facilities at any one time: 30 to 35 in Williamsport, and 30 at the Day Treatment Center. About 95 to 100 students are typically served in the course of a year. Although AEP placements are made on a grading period basis for each student, many students stay at AEP for an academic year or longer.

AEP staff consists of a program manager who oversees both sites, three full-time instructors at the main facility, and one full-time instructor at the Day Treatment Center. The Day Treatment Center staff, while not staff of AEP, sit with students during the AEP component of their day and monitor all aspects of students' behavior. The Director of Alternative Programs, from the Intermediate Unit, provides some administration and coordination for AEP's whole operation.

AEP staff cooperate closely with students' teachers at the sending school. First, students remain enrolled and registered in their classes at their home school even while they are placed at AEP. Second, AEP staff carry out the individualized learning plans that home school teachers devise. Third, they submit student grades and sometimes student work, to home school teachers for report cards issued by home schools. Students work individually, or in small groups with an AEP instructor, when feasible.

AEP staff closely monitor daily attendance in conjunction with officials from outside agencies, such as parole officers or case workers, depending on individual situations. Students may earn points in AEP's behavior modification system for doing assigned tasks and exhibiting appropriate behaviors. The incentive is early dismissal on Friday.

AEP does not provide counseling for students. However, within the constraints of time and program goals, AEP staff sometimes help current and former students to find jobs, connect with other community agencies, or prepare for the high school equivalency exam.

Rationale:

AEP is built on the model of Upward Bound, a program originated in the mid-1960's to boost the academic performance of disadvantaged youth. Given the problems AEP students have experienced in coping with school or law enforcement authorities, AEP also borrows from what the Director of Alternative Programs in Lycoming County describes as Glaser's reality therapy techniques. These challenge students to take responsibility for making their own decisions and choices without making excuses. Students' knowledge that AEP represents a program of last resort before school expulsion or residential custody and that there is a high demand for placement in AEP, are factors in the "reality therapy" practiced at AEP.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

AEP tracks its students' academic progress while they are in the program and in subsequent educational settings, either back at the home school or in other alternatives such as equivalency programs. In a given school year, 60% of AEP students complete the school year successfully. Overall, 45% complete a secondary education program by the time they reach age 19; an additional 15% complete a secondary education program by the time they reach age 21, usually by obtaining an equivalency diploma. Staff estimate that for another 25%, AEP provides a positive educational experience — for some, their first — despite their lack of completion within a few years. Under 15% of AEP students provoke further contact with the criminal justice system after leaving the program.

Less formal means of evaluation include AEP's good reputation with school district staff, its record for receiving funding from school districts and the county, and the instances of former students who return for further help.

School/Community Context:

Lycoming County, in which the eight cooperating school districts are located, enjoys a diversified economic base of various light industries and agriculture. The area is recovering from a recent period of high unemployment. The population is almost entirely white, with 2 to 3% of blacks concentrated in Williamsport, the area's large city.

Resources Needed:

Funding:	The total budget for AEP's two sites came to $128,000 in 1986-87. Of that amount, school districts contributed 56% and the county, 44%. The amount and proportion are determined annually in negotiation with the principal parties. At present, most of the money is allocated as line items in the school districts' and the county's budgets.
Staffing:	Four full-time instructors and an on-site program manager comprise the staff of the two AEP sites, with support by the director of Lycoming County Alternative Education. Social workers and parole officers from outside agencies assist in tracking down absent students, but are not formally associated with AEP.
Planning:	An advisory committee that meets about four times a year explores the broad needs and concerns of AEP. Its members are drawn from each cooperating school district, from the Lycoming County Office of Children and Youth Services, and from the county commissioner's office. It is convened by the director of Lycoming County Alternative Education.
Training:	Staff development, specifically for AEP instructors, has not been scheduled in the past three to four years due to little money available for that purpose. They attend staff development activities that are offered in cooperating districts and the county, however.

Historical Perspective:

In the fall of 1976, county educators and justice officials jointly agreed on the need for an in-county Alternative Education Program to serve disruptive and delinquent youth. Impetus was provided by a juvenile court judge who was troubled over the lack of non-residential placements of intermediate severity and of reasonable cost for delinquent youth. Simultaneously, school superintendents in the county's eight school districts noticed an increase in disruptive students. AEP began operating in January 1977, with money from a federal grant administered by Lycoming County.

For the next four years, the program obtained various grants, such as one from the Governor's Justice Committee and funds from ESEA Title IVC, with the balance furnished by the school districts. When external funding was exhausted in 1980-81, the school districts and the county agreed to plan for and to support the program jointly, on a year-to-year basis. The Day Treatment Center for adjudicated youth, run by the county's Welfare Department, also began operating about that time to provide counseling and other supervised activities for delinquent and dependent youth. The AEP took on the additional duty of providing the educational component for the Day Treatment Center youth of mandatory school age. One AEP instructor now staffs the Day Treatment Center, while the three other instructors work in AEP's main facility.

The Intermediate Unit also oversees a Bradford County alternative education center that was established in 1979-80 on the Lycoming AEP model. It currently serves 15 to 17 disruptive and delinquent youth on a budget of $62,000, supported almost equally by Lycoming County and by Bradford County cooperating school districts. A Tioga County alternative education program, also modeled on Lycoming's AEP, closed when school districts withdrew their support.

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Strategy

- Student and Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem:

- Groups of Students

Domains for Action

- School organization
- Special services
- Incentives
- Family support
- Curriculum

Agencies Involved

- Schools at all Levels
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- Mental Health Agencies
- Community Service Agencies
- Business & Business Related Groups

Cities-In-Schools Program
Philadelphia School District's Adaptation

(applicable to grades 5-12)

Purpose:

The purpose of this effort is threefold: (1) to keep at-risk students in school, (2) to assure that they have the basic academic skills necessary for employment, and (3) to provide students with work experience and job readiness skills that will be needed in the employment world.

Target Audience:

Although the Cities-In-Schools program can provide services and experiences to all students in the school, the emphasis is on students whose achievement and attendance records, supported by teacher observations, indicate that they are at high risk of dropping out of school.

Description:

The Cities-In-Schools (CIS) program is a national model of a coordinated school, city department, and community-based human service delivery system designed to meet the needs of students identified as "at-risk" of dropping out. The model includes the formation of a Board of Directors, composed of key city decision-makers such as the mayor or city manager (or the person who makes key decisions regarding social services), the superintendent of schools, and a representative from the corporate sector, the department of justice, college/university, and department of recreation. This board files for non-profit status (501C3), and both provides the leadership and secures the funds necessary to achieve the goal of harnessing the city's services to better serve youth in the schools.

Each city puts their own unique stamp on their CIS program. There are six cities in Pennsylvania currently involved in developing a CIS program: Still Valley, Allentown, Pittsburgh, Bethlehem, Pottstown, and Philadelphia. Additional cities are being added regularly.

What follows is a description of the Philadelphia School District's CIS model. The program currently involves 4 high schools, 2 junior high schools, and 1 elementary school. It has the added feature of being combined with the District's Education for Employment Initiative. The program is organized around the following major tasks.

Grouping Students for Instruction

Each school may establish different ways of grouping students for instruction. At Kensington High School students are rostered to a common core of teachers for the subjects of English, science, mathematics and social studies. Students are grouped according to ability. Some may receive supplementary tutorial services. They have a common lunch period. Students may rotate their fifth major subject each report period. This course may be a class with the general school population (reading, art, English, social science, or accounting) or a special course provided through the resources of one of the collaborating community agencies. CIS teachers meet monthly to discuss individual students and develop future plans and activities.

Providing Support Services Motivational Activities

The basic instructional program is supplemented by support services provided in the school building by the participating city departments and community agencies. Such services include health, mental health, social and recreational supports by agencies and community organizations. These agencies serve the schools in two ways. One is to place their workers into the school building where they meet with students on a regular basis. For example, the Boy's Club has a worker at Kensington High School for two days every week to help students schedule time for after school Boy's Club activities, and to stay in contact with those youth who have visited the club. In order to inform or remind students of their presence at school, they may make classroom presentations or conduct individual student follow-ups.

A second way agencies serve the schools is by providing "on call" workers, who respond to the school's needs as requested. They may be invited in to conduct special small group or one-on-one counseling sessions, or classroom presentations. CIS teachers meet on a monthly basis with agency representatives in order to discuss the needs of individual students and to plan future collaborative activities. Classroom presentations by agencies are planned to coincide with instructional objectives (e.g., a session on self-esteem in an English class may result in a related writing assignment, a community speaker who was a political hostage may speak in a social studies class). Presentations are made to groups no larger than a class.

As a result of this effort, participating agencies and community organizations in Philadelphia CIS schools now have direct and regular contact with teen clients. They have provided a wide range of services such as human relations counseling, problem-solving and decision-making experiences, suicide and crisis intervention counseling, drug counseling, services for young parents, and special speakers. They also seek to involve students in local community efforts, such as local blood drives.

As a way of assuring that CIS students receive the full benefits of these support services, all students share a common school counselor. This counselor is supported by the array of community counseling services such as the bilingual counselor from LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens), or the counselors from Woodrock who conduct weekly group sessions ranging from human relations activities to environmental education issues. The counselor may refer individual students to any of these services, and conduct follow-up studies.

All CIS students who are promoted with their grade are rewarded with a summer job, or full-time job upon graduation. In addition, the community and various community agencies are providing CIS students with opportunities for activities that serve as incentives for accomplishing school goals: tickets to popular concerts, plays, spectator sports; camping trips; visits to TV stations; or a week-long visit to a career development laboratory.

Providing Career Exploration and Employment Opportunities

Work and school are tied together for students participating in the program in several ways.

- Employment Center. Several Philadelphia schools have established Employment Centers designed to provide services for youth at risk of dropping out of school. All CIS students are served by the Center. The Center provides a location for workers from community health and social service agencies to meet with CIS students on a regular basis, as well as facilitate the following activities:
  - — conducting career development assessments
  - — developing an Employability Development Plan (EDP) for each student
  - — referring students for basic skills remediation
  - — organizing career exposure experiences
  - — identifying neighborhood jobs
  - — coordinating the Private Industry Council with the Pennsylvania Office of Employment Security to match students with jobs
  - — placing eligible students in part-time and summer jobs, and full-time jobs upon graduation
  - — following up with students and employees
  - — coordinating the activities of existing school district resources, such as school-work coordinators, JobSearch teachers, career development specialists, and distributive education instructors
  - — maintaining an in-school job bank.
- Employability Development Plan (EDP). Each CIS student is given an initial employability skills assessment to determine the extent of job readiness and to identify employability skills needing improvement. Based upon this and other information, an Employability Development Plan is compiled for each student. This EDP forms the basis for determining where the student should be placed on a continuim of career development and employability skills training activities.

- Employment Incentives. Match-ups between students and jobs are coordinated with the Private Industry Council and the Pennsylvania Office of Employment Security, and facilitated by the Education Center.
- Job Search. CIS students, in schools where available, participate in JobSearch, a program that provides them with the skills needed to acquire a job and make a successful transition from school to work. In a classroom furnished and equipped like modern business offices with computers, phones, copiers, and video equipment, JobSearch students explore their career goals, increase their business vocabulary and analyze their skills.

Maintaining Contact with the Home

CIS recognizes that important positive support can come from significant parent involvement. The following strategies are designed to encourage this support:

— open houses
— daily follow-up of student absence
— interim reports
— failure letters
— home visits by Chapter 1 Home School Coordinators
— phone calls and letters, as needed.

Rationale:

The CIS model program operates on the following set of beliefs about the needs of at-risk youth and about the programs that can serve them best.

- These youth can be assured better prospects of becoming effective, productive citizens if they can see the relevance of school to their lives, and if they receive assistance in making the transition from school to work.
- A coordinated approach focusing on instruction and the involvement of local health and social service agencies will enable these youth to graduate from school and move on to either employment and/or higher education.
- The school is in the best position to organize and manage such a multifaceted approach.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

The best data on CIS program effectiveness in Philadelphia is available from a high school (Kensington), and two special programs — BEST and DRIVE at Penn Treaty Junior High. These data demonstrate modest changes after one year. Subsequent data will be very important to determining continued program effectiveness.

As measures of effectiveness, evaluation has focused upon promotion, dropout, and attendance rates. Improvement was recorded in all three areas (where applicable), as follows:

	N=	Promotion Rate 6/85 - 6/86		Dropout Rate 6/85 - 6/86		Attendance Rate 6/85 - 6/86	
Kensington High School	120	29%	63%	29%	19%	72%	83%
Penn Treaty DRIVE	24	39%	83%	N/A	N/A	55%	77%
Penn Treaty BEST	27	52%	61%	N/A	N/A	59%	63%

School/Community Context:

The Philadelphia School District is one of the largest in the nation. It serves an urban population, and many of its students are economically disadvantaged. Many of the students are drawn from minority groups, as well. Since many students are only familiar with English as a second language, student deficiency in English is a challenge in several areas of the district.

Resources Needed:

Staffing: Each CIS school has a coordinator who is responsible for identifying and recruiting student clients, identifying community support services, developing a relationship with these agencies, and planning and implementing a delivery system. This requires a person with excellent networking skills and considerable energy.

Support: The CIS is a national program that provides support and training to affiliated programs. There is a set procedure for securing this affiliated status, available from the national office. Affiliated programs are eligible for on-site technical assistance and follow-up from the national office.

Each CIS program needs the support of a Board of Directors who can make important decisions regarding education, social and health services; and who can solicit corporate support and raise funds for needed programs.

Historical Perspective:

The Cities-In-Schools national program is currently in place in 17 cities in 6 different regions throughout the country. By the end of this school year, 22 districts will be involved. The program's beginnings can be traced to the Street Academies of the 1960's, in which store-front alternative schools housed community services for dropouts. Federal grants from the Departments of Justice, Labor, Health and Human Services provide most of the funds accompanied by in-kind contributions from the Department of Education.

The Cities-In-Schools (CIS) program in Philadelphia began operation at Kensington High School in September 1985. Since that time two junior high schools, an elementary school, and several more high schools have been added to the CIS list of participating schools.

The CIS model was presented to school district staff in February 1985. The Superintendent and key community leadership believed that this model, combined with the district's Education for Employment Initiative, would greatly benefit youth at risk. The idea of building on the resources of neighborhood health and social services agencies seemed to answer the need of developing community interest and support for neighborhood schools, and would also provide the energy needed to serve youth at risk. With district support, the coordinator of the programs for youth at risk at Kensington High School worked to start up the first CIS program by fall, 1985.

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Strategy
- Environment-Oriented (4)

Scope of Problem
- All 7th Grade Students

Domains for Action
- Curriculum
- Instruction
- Peer Culture

Agencies Involved
- Junior High School (1)
- Mental Health

Coping Skills Among Young Adolescents
Cooke Jr. High/Hahnemann University

(applicable to middle/junior high school)

Purpose:

The overall purpose of this project is to develop, pilot, and evaluate the effects of a coping curriculum for young adolescents. The goal is to create a program that can be used in junior high school where there is concern about how youngsters cope with the demands of school and the interpersonal environment. The curriculum is being designed to help students better manage difficult situations that come up in their lives — to enable them to cope by managing their own emotional reactions in order to prevent maladaptive behavior and promote mental health.

Target Audience:

The target audience for this intervention is seventh grade students. The students participating in this pilot project attend Jay Cooke Junior High, an inner city school located within a low income neighborhood.

Description:

The coping curriculum is designed to be taught for two semesters, once a week, in 45-minute sessions. Lessons are taught by teachers in a class period set aside for this purpose. Lessons focus primarily upon coping skills that enable the youngsters to recognize, understand, manage and control the thoughts and feelings that lead to problems or success in school, interpersonal relations, self-esteem or emotional well-being. The contents of each lesson are built upon Hahneman's research with the Cooke students, and upon the work of others that suggest what constitutes effective coping in this population. For example, because research indicates that youngsters who cope by worrying and by thinking aggressive thoughts are often the least well adjusted, the curriculum addresses how to cope through worry and anger control. Students learn basic information about worry and anger, including the types of situations that cause these emotions, the symptoms associated with each (feelings, thoughts, physical reactions), and the types of behavior that result. After becoming more aware of their own worry and anger, students learn various techniques for controlling these feelings. The techniques emphasized are primarily cognitive (things kids can do in their own heads to feel better); but some behavioral skills such as relaxation and talking things out with a friend are also taught.

Two of the main cognitive techniques taught are "rethink" (i.e., how many different ways a situation can be appraised and reappraised), and "self-talk" (the positive or negative things we say to ourselves that guide our behavior and affect how we feel). Rethink teaches students that their thoughts are the key to feeling better. Specifically, rethink teaches students that they can relieve their uncomfortable feelings by changing their thoughts about the situation that provoked them. Self-talk is what people say to themselves as they cope with a stressful situation. Positive self-talk ("this could have been worse", "this is not as bad as last week") helps keep uncomfortable feelings like anger and worry from escalating.

The lessons teaching emotion-focused coping are being piloted during the current (1986-1987) year, and a final curriculum will be available for full field testing in the fall of 1987.

Rationale:

The coping curriculum is focused on seventh graders because this is a crucial developmental stage and because the period following the transition to junior high school is extremely stressful. Research indicates that the negative impact of failing to cope well at this age, if unmanaged, often leads to severe academic and emotional problems in senior high school and in diminished post-high school work adjustment, as well as in young adult life. As a result, learning to cope at this stage is viewed as a means of preventing later adverse outcomes.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Effectiveness will be measured over a four-year period. All youngsters will be pre- and post-tested immediately after the intervention, and reassessed each year into high school, using a variety of coping, problem solving, and behavioral and emotional functioning measures. Also noted will be the number of youngsters left back (remain in seventh grade) and/or referred for academic, behavioral or emotional problems. In the long run, success will be evaluated in terms of rates of drop-out, conflicts in school and other academic, social and psychological dimensions.

School/Community Content:

Cooke Junior High contains 1,500 students from a variety of ethnic groups: 83% black, 10% Asian, 4% Hispanic, and 3% other. The percentage of students from low income families is 47.8. During the school year 1985-86, 9% of the students were in ESOL/Bilingual programs.

Resources Needed:

Materials: A coping curriculum manual will be available following full field testing in 1987-88.

Training: Effective teaching in this domain requires in-service training that orients teachers to the content and methods of the curriculum. Staff also benefit from assistance in establishing the appropriate in-class environment, controls, and rewards to optimize the learning of the lessons.

Coordination/Support: A staff person is needed to plan the implementation process, evaluate the curriculum's impact, provide feedback and help teachers on an individual basis, as well as to deal with school-based logistical problems that often arise when a new process is introduced.

Historical Perspective:

Two key events led to the development of this project: (1) the arrival of a new principal at Cooke who had earlier positive contacts with Hahnemann while at another school, and who is deeply committed to improving the climate of schools like Cooke; and (2) the ongoing work (over the last 15 years) of Hahnemann University in Philadelphia schools through their work in the creation of preventive intervention programs.

Year 1 and 2 (September '84-August '86) of the project involved conducting an extensive evaluation of seventh grade students to learn about how they coped and to determine the relationship between coping and mental health and classroom adjustment. In Year 2, preliminary emotion-focused lessons based on the research were developed and piloted with several guidance classes. New data was also collected using refined instruments. Work continued during the summer of Year 2 with a committee of teachers revising the preliminary lessons to be used by seventh grade teachers, beginning in Year 3. New lessons were also developed that summer with the assistance of a group of Cooke students who received small stipends for their involvement. Year 3 (the current year) is the first year of teaching and refining the curriculum that involves all Cooke seventh graders. New lessons are also being written. Future years will focus on assessing the short- and long-term impact of the coping curriculum.

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Strategy
- Student and Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem
- Groups of Students

Domains for Action
- School organization
- Incentives
- Family support
- Special services
- Curriculum

Agencies Involved
- High School (1)
- Junior High (1)
- Health Agencies
- Welfare Agencies
- Community Service

Gettysburg Adolescent Parenting Program (GAPP)
Gettysburg Area School
(applicable to 7-12)

Purpose:

The goals of the Gettysburg School District for pregnant students and/or student parents are to: (1) increase the number that graduate; (2) increase their daily attendance rates; and (3) help them to become economically self-sufficient, effective parents.

Target Audience:

Any pregnant student or student parent may participate in the program. GAPP currently includes students in grades 9 through 12.

Description:

The primary emphasis of GAPP is to provide pregnant students with the support, education and assistance necessary to allow them to complete their education. Students' participation in the program is voluntary.

GAPP is a district-wide program implemented by a team comprised of district/school staff: Director of Pupil Services, Director of Counseling, School Social Worker, Home Economics Teacher, School Nurse, Guidance Counselors, and School Psychologist. Once a student enters the program, the GAPP team prepares an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP). The plan is designed to meet the specific needs and goals of the student, but contains certain formal life skills coursework in addition to basic skills subjects. GAPP contains seven parts:

- formal course work — human development, basic and advanced culinary skills, and infant and toddler laboratories (3 days of class work, and 2 days in the lab)
- infant and toddler laboratories — provides day care for 6-week to school-age children; and provides learning environment for mothers in child care and development. Children are taught gross and fine motor skills, language development, socialization, and cognitive development. Mothers join children and are taught about the learning value of child/parent interactions, and how to responsibly care for their child's needs
- full-time social worker — provides day-to-day support to students; provides individual and group counseling; acts as liaison with community and other services, as necessary; monitors attendance; and provides assistance in coordinating doctor/medical treatments
- career counseling — provides individual and group counseling in helping students plan for work or further schooling after graduation
- personal counseling — provides individualized support from any member of the team, depending on the student's problem, by the social worker, guidance counselor, and school psychologist. May include the father and/or the student's family
- health care services — provides for the full-time assistance of the social worker and the school nurse in monitoring and coordinating the individual medical needs of students
- transportation — district subcontracts through a local agency to provide transportation to mothers and children.

Though the seven components of the program provide a comprehensive educational and support system, the district believes that the day care center, run by the school, is the strongest part of the program. The center not only provides full-time care and instruction to children, allowing mothers to stay in school, but, at the same time, provides them with an environment to learn the requisite skills to care for and raise their children. The fathers and families of the student can participate in any or all parts of the program.

Other agencies that are often involved in providing support include: housing, welfare, and health departments; drug and alcohol abuse, family planning, JTPA, and child services.

Rationale:

There is a long-term, strongly held belief by many staff at the district/school level that the school needs to be concerned about and be actively involved in retaining pregnant students and providing the support necessary to allow them to complete their schooling. The district believes that students should, as a result of participating in the program, leave with a better sense of self-worth, good parenting skills, and the confidence that they are better prepared to enter adulthood and become productive members of society. There is also an underlying belief, supported by research, that when the children of dropouts enter school, they exhibit less socialized behaviors, are often discipline problems, and are difficult to engage in learning. The children of student mothers who receive the knowledge and skills provided by GAPP will have a more positive influence on their children toward school and learning.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

The program has been in effect only one year (1985-1986), and is thus lacking quantitative evidence of effectiveness. However, preliminary evidence suggests that the program has had some positive results. Of the 23 students in the first year of the program, 2 students went on to college, 3 quit but are in the G.E.D. program, and the rest remain in school and are working toward graduation. In addition, several pregnant students who had previously dropped out of school, returned because they could now continue schooling and receive support from the program.

School/Community Context:

Gettysburg is a geographically large rural district. There is no public transportation to allow for easy travel within the area. It has a bi-modal SES pattern, with migrant laborers and farmers at the lower end of the scale and, influenced by Gettysburg College and state-related jobs, business and academic professionals at the upper end. The district is 3-5% minority.

Resources Needed:

Funding:	A grant from the state for approximately $42,000 funded year one of a 5-year decreasing grant. This covers staff time, facilities enhancement for child care, and transportation (the grant provided approximately 90% of the first year costs, the district contributed 10%. In order for this program to continue, district funds will be needed to fund the program as the state's subsidy decreases).
Staffing:	One full-time social worker and two full-time aides trained in child care, working in coordination with district/school staff.
Planning:	All staff involved in the program need to plan the coordination of its various components: develop IGP, coordinate/schedule classes and doctor visits/medication; transportation, and involvement with other agencies.
Training:	New staff need to learn the program procedures and the individual needs of students.
Equipment:	State child care facilities are required, by law, to contain certain equipment and safety features. Necessities include: refrigerator, changing table, kitchenette (sink), oven or microwave, sleeping area, rugs, play areas that allow for the different developmental stages of the children (infant vs toddler), and games/educational materials.

Historical Perspective:

In 1980, five years before GAPP was established, the Gettysburg School District became aware that they were experiencing a problem with students becoming pregnant and leaving school.

It was believed that the school should provide the support necessary to retain these students and enable them to graduate. Funding and the facilities at the school were not sufficient to create an in-school program, nor was there support from the community to establish such a program in the school. Subsequently, a relationship between the local YWCA and the school was established, to support a social worker who would provide counseling, information and support to pregnant teens. The school arranged for its students to join the program, after school, in the hope that they would receive enough support and assistance to keep them in school.

By 1984, the incidence of pregnant students dropping out of school was still high. In an endeavor to systematize the data on dropouts, an exit interview form was created, which when completed, revealed pregnancy as one of the more frequent reasons for leaving school. This data, plus the case records of the social worker at the YWCA, were used to support the school's proposal for grant monies in 1985, under the Governor's initiative. The school received a grant to establish an in-school program. Support for the program has increased both within the school and the community, but there is still a concern for the future of the program when the state funds run out.

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Strategy

- Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem

- Groups of Students

Domains for Action

- Teacher role
- Incentives
- Peer culture
- Curriculum

Agencies Involved

- High School (1)
- Elementary (2; K-6 & K-8)
- Community Service Agencies
- Business
- Churches
- Universities
- Government

Neighborhood Improvement and Youth Employment Project
West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC)

Philadelphia School District/West Philadelphia Partnership*/University of Pennsylvania
(applicable to K-12)

Purpose:

The goals of this project are three-fold:

- to increase student commitment to school and community, to increase self-esteem, and to improve student achievement levels, attendance and behavior
- to address the needs of the community, with particular emphasis in the area of community improvement activities
- to demonstrate how schools, community organizations and higher education institutions, in an urban setting, can work together for the improvement of the neighborhood's quality of life, using the school as the focus of attention.

Target Audience:

Small groups of students (20-60) from each of the three participating schools volunteer for involvement in the program. All three schools serve high numbers of youth at risk, and are located in what program planners call "at-risk communities." These communities and their residents have become another primary target audience for program implementation.

Description:

This is a developmental program; its scope and direction, in large part, determined by early successes and current opportunities. However, the core of the project involves an after school and summer program, during which time students and teachers are involved in a community-based experiential curriculum that emphasizes community improvement activities. Students from each of the three schools participate in neighborhood and school beautification and renewal efforts such as:

- landscaping
- constructing a pocket park
- painting murals on the school walls
- planting neighborhood flower and vegetable gardens.

Other activities include:

- surveying residents in order to identify current concerns and future needs
- maintaining their improvements
- collecting information for and writing a neighborhood newspaper.

The teacher-designed curriculum focuses on the community, and stresses hands-on, participatory learning. At the elementary level, the curriculum integrates social studies, math, science and language arts as they relate to the community and school improvement activities. The curriculum for older students has more of a science and math emphasis (horticulture, biology). All students engage in career exploration activities, appropriate to their grade level. In addition, the curriculum stresses the concept of community responsibility, civic participation and pride.

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*The West Philadelphia Partnership is a consortium of educational/health care/scientific institutions, community organizations, residents, and companies that seek to revitalize residential and economic life in and near University City.

This program is also distinguished by the following unique programmatic efforts.

- The Role of Teachers. Teachers are central, providing not only the leadership in developing and implementing the program, but in becoming highly visible and dynamic role models as they become involved in neighborhood and school renewal efforts. Their involvement includes:
  - —designing a community-based curriculum that integrates social studies, math, science and language arts for the after school and summer enrichment program
  - —working with students in planning and carrying out neighborhood and school improvement activities
  - —meeting with residents, local community organizations and businesses as their students engage in the various community activities. Their activity serves not only as a catalyst to further neighborhood projects, but as a result they become more involved and connected to the needs of the community.
- Incentives. There are numerous incentives for students involved in this program, for example:
  - —intrinsic rewards are provided for elementary students from Bryant in the form of summer programs or after-school programs that provide small teacher-child ratios, and programs that combine academic remediation, enrichment, and review with the community-based curriculum. Older students receive intrinsic rewards as they engage in similar experiences.
  - —extrinsic rewards are offered to seventh and eighth grade students from the H.C. Lea School in the form of stipends, and to high school students from West Philadelphia High in the form of salaries or stipends, for their involvement in a summer and after-school community improvement program that integrates the curriculum into a community-based, action-oriented experience.
  - —a very special extrinsic reward for all students is the recognition and admiration of the neighborhood. In addition, students increase their own self-esteem as they see their work make a positive difference in their community.
- Support System. The teachers and students are supported in their work by a unique cooperative effort of several key community institutions and organizations. These include:
  - —the University of Pennsylvania — provides expertise and resources from four of its schools (Education, Arts and Science, Nursing, Architecture). Undergraduate and graduate interns work directly with students and teachers. They have assisted students in developing landscape plans, instituting a communication campaign linking school and community, and exploring the issue of delivering health services to the school community. They have conducted research on a variety of issues relating to university-community relationships and to the schools.
  - —the West Philadelphia Partnership — a consortium of education/health care/scientific institutions, community organizations, residents and businesses provides support and resources to the schools' efforts. They also assist in budget management by handling teacher and student stipends, and supplying funds for miscellaneous supplies and resources.

Participants in the project believe that a great deal of its success depends upon this wide base of community and university support and interest, and that this support will increase as a result of the first small successes. The most dramatic outcome of this collaboration has been the formation of the West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC), an organization that includes representatives from the West Philadelphia Partnership, the University of Pennsylvania, and the neighborhood schools. WEPIC has thus far received funding from UPS, the Office of Employment and Training, PHILAJOB, Private Industry Council, Fels Fund, and Hunt Manufacturing for the continuation of these school-based neighborhood improvement and youth employment efforts.

In addition, this coalition has assisted in the formation of a 15-member Bryant Community Council that will attempt to discuss and meet community needs, and support the improvement activities of the Bryant School.

- The Influence of the Peer Culture. Students in this project are involved in activities that demonstrate a commitment to conventional social roles and norms, such as assuming responsibility for improving the physical condition of their community. They work side-by-side with teachers who serve as role models, and they work with each other as they demonstrate their capability to make a difference in their neighborhood. In turn, these youths exert a powerful influence on their peers, as they act as role models in their school and neighborhood.

Rationale:

The efforts of the schools, of the West Philadelphia Partnership, and of the University of Pennsylvania are guided by some fundamental beliefs about schools, communities and change, as follows.

- Working to mesh education, neighborhood needs and youth employment opportunities enriches the lives of at-risk youth, families and neighborhoods.
- Joint efforts of schools and community organizations and institutions should be directed toward the central problems of these communities: education, jobs, housing, and general neighborhood deterioration.
- Schools are a neutral institution in these neighborhoods, and they are able to provide a range of services that are both needed by the residents and essential for the formation of a stable neighborhood (e.g., health, employment, neighborhood improvement).
- When schools assume this role, residents will begin to view the school and education as important to the community, and this view will improve the school's ability to educate.
- Teachers are the focal point for change within the school environment, and should be in a leadership position in the development of a community-based curriculum.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

This project is in its second year, but growing at a fast pace. However, WEPIC can point to several indicators of their initial effectiveness over the first year-and-a-half of operation.

- Teachers observe the development of self-esteem and pride in previously quiet unengaged youth.
- The after-school Constructing Your Neighborhood curriculum, that draws from every content area (science, social studies, language arts, math and art) is becoming integral to the regular standardized curriculum at Bryant Elementary School and used, to varying degrees, by all teachers in the building.
- A positive impact on the community has been observed: the identification of two block captains; the formation of a community council; praise from community leaders, residents, local police; reduced vandalism; support of local businesses; and increased community pride.
- The success of the program at the Bryant Elementary School led to the start-up of further activities of West Philadelphia High School and H.C. Lea School.
- There has been the award of new grants based upon their successes and on community support to date, and the project is under consideration as a local and national model youth corps project.

School/Community Context:

The West Philadelphia area is characterized by a mix of poor and lower income families. Both the Bryant Elementary School and West Philadelphia High School are over 90% black. Lea School differs in that 25% of the school population is Southeast Asian. The neighborhood around the Bryant School is beginning to show some housing rehabilitation efforts and community improvements, that will be further increased through future WEPIC program efforts.

Resources Needed:

Funding:	Outside funding from private foundations, the University, the city, and neighborhood businesses enabled WEPIC to pay high school student salaries, seventh and eighth grade student stipends, and teacher stipends and supplies. The schools provided some materials and supplies. There were also in-kind contributions (transportation, food, etc.) from an array of community sources and businesses.
Staffing:	Central to this project's success are teachers who develop the curriculum, work with students, and provide important leadership for the project's overall direction.
Support:	Limited support of key community people and organizations is essential from the outset. The experience of those involved in the project indicates that limited support can quickly become strong and widespread support, following the first visible successes in the community.

Historical Perspective:

The idea for this project was developed in a University of Pennsylvania undergraduate honors seminar on urban university/community relations, conducted by President Sheldon Hackney, Dr. Ira Harkavy (Director of the Office of Community-Oriented Policy Studies), Barbara R. Stevens (Assistant to the President for External Affairs), and Dr. Lee Benson (Professor of History). Student research resulted in a proposal that became a reality following the events of the Move confrontation (May 1985), and the increased need to promote positive community-focused activities, especially for neighborhood youth. Although this dramatic event served as an important catalyst for the start-up of the program, its apparent success with the community, schools, and government has led to further growth and an expanded vision of what can be accomplished.

The first phase of the project (summer 1985) was a summer youth employment and neighborhood improvement project for 62 youth (ages 14-21) in and around the Bryant Elementary School. Phase Two of the project (fall 1985) was an after-school program for 30 students (fourth-sixth grade) at Bryant Elementary, two Bryant Elementary teachers, two of the students from the summer program, and some students from the University of Pennsylvania. They focused on learning about the people, institutions and buildings of their neighborhood, as they sought to improve their neighborhood. This is called the "Construct Your Neighborhood" program.

Phase Three (spring, 1986) involves the continuation of summer and after-school programs expanded to include H.C. Lea School and West Philadelphia High School. In addition, teacher participants from all three schools are participating in a special seminar at Penn designed to assist them in planning and developing these programs and the related curriculum for their schools.

Through funds secured by the collaborative efforts of WEPIC, a community school-based youth employment program, including pre-apprenticeship training job counseling and placement activities, will be initiated (winter 1987 with West Philadelphia High School) with 20 salaried high school students. The program will initially involve both housing rehabilitation and landscaping, and ultimately the development of commercial property for businesses in the Bryant School area. Classroom training will occur in the immediate neighborhood of the community schools and on-the-job training at the nearby renovation site. Apprenticeship placements for graduates of the program will be arranged with several private sector organizations in the area. At the rehabilitation site, teams of students from all three schools will work together, in learning projects appropriate to their age. As this project evolves, additional neighborhood sites will be targeted for rehabilitation.

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Strategy

- Students and Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem

- Groups of Students

Domains for Action

- Curriculum
- Teacher role
- Special services
- Family Support

Agencies Involved

- Academies (4)
- High Schools (9)
- Businesses
- Industry

Philadelphia High School Academies Program
Philadelphia School District

(applicable to 9-12)

Purpose:

To provide disadvantaged, inner-city high school students with marketable job skills, and to create a bridge from school to work.

Target Audience:

High school students, primarily disadvantaged inner-city youth, many of whom are underachievers or potential dropouts, who want to develop marketable job skills.

Description:

The Academies are schools within existing comprehensive high schools that serve students in grades nine through twelve. At this time, Philadelphia has four high school academies: The Academy of Applied Electrical Science, at Bartram and Edison High Schools; The Philadelphia Business Academy, at South Philadelphia, University City, William Penn, Strawberry Mansion, and Roxborough High Schools; the Academy of Automotive and Mechanical Science, at West Philadelphia High School; and the Philadelphia Health Academy, at Overbrook and Martin Luther King High Schools. Although each academy is unique in its operational focus, all of the academies work cooperatively with local business, industry, and labor within the framework of the public schools to assist students in the transition from school to work.

Each academy exists as an independent corporation with its own board of directors. The Philadelphia High School Academy Association (PHSAA) coordinates the activities of the various boards. The PHSAA board consists of the superintendents of schools, the executive director of career and vocational education for the school district of Philadelphia, the school district's liaison to the Academies program, the head of the teacher's union, chief executive officers of major Philadelphia corporations, members of the corporate community, the executive directors of each academy, and representatives of other business, labor and civic groups.

Academy support is provided jointly by the private sector and the public school system. The private sector provides:

- technical expertise for planning, developing and refining the program
- special equipment and supplies
- job exposure through site visits and speakers
- jobs for students during the school year, summer, and after graduation
- money for staff development and salaries of selected academy personnel.

The school district provides:

- additional academic and vocational teaching staff
- facilities
- equipment and supplies
- staff development and administrative support
- students.

Generally, academy students who enter the program have attended classes regularly in junior high school, shown an interest in the vocational area represented by their chosen academy, expressed a preference for a course of study that is not solely academic, and achieved a minimum of a fifth grade reading or math level in standardized tests. Some have scores on the California Achievement Tests above the thirtieth percentile and a few below the tenth percentile. Approximately 95% are minority students. Slightly over 50% are female. Such a student body requires a program than can inspire poorly motivated and performing students to stay in school. As one person associated with the project noted, "This is a special program for people who have never been part of anything special."

Parental cooperation and support are integral to the program. A special orientation night is held in the fall for parents new to the program. The students whose parents attend the meeting receive free school t-shirts. In the spring, there is an awards night for parents and students; awards are given for attendance, behavior, achievement, special projects, and so forth. A quarterly newsletter also keeps parents and students apprised of the program. Teachers make an effort to inform parents of student progress, absence, or personal problems, and encourage parents to attend meetings and learn more about the program.

The academies provide: (1) an integrated vocational academic curriculum, (2) career education awareness and counseling, and job readiness; and (3) actual work experience.

- Integrating Vocational and Academic Curriculum. Students in most academy programs are "block rostered," scheduled for basic skills and vocational courses together at each grade level. However, there is flexibility, students can be rostered out of the block to meet their specific needs, like taking courses outside of the Academy curriculum where necessary to meet a job or educational requirement. Students are required to take a prescribed sequence that includes mathematics, English, science, social studies, and in some cases, foreign language. The curriculum of each course is designed to meet the stringent new state and local requirements for graduation. In addition, academy students may take vocational courses that teach skills required for their particular academy.

  Academy teachers have worked extensively with business and industry personnel to integrate the vocational and academic curricula. For example, in the Business Academy, English teachers require business students to use their typing skills when writing papers. Vocabulary lessons include words that are specific to the focus of each particular academy. The Academy of Applied Electrical Science uses math problems related to electronics, electricity, energy, and electrical repair. The Academy of Automotive and Mechanical Science uses examples from engine repair to teach the concept of levers. In the Health Academy, teachers may teach students a medical vocabulary in Spanish that will be useful on the job.

- Career Education and Counseling. Career education is part of a student's daily instructional lessons. Speakers from the private sector visit regularly to talk about their business or industry, conduct mock job interviews, or describe their attitudes and expectation of employees. Students tour a variety of local business and industrial sites and talk with all levels of employees.

  Although academy students are assigned a regular high school counselor, academic, vocational, and personal counseling are part of the program. Frequently, a student is assigned an academy teacher to whom he or she can go for guidance. Some academies also assign each student an industry mentor, someone in the field who can offer specialized career guidance and advice.

- Work Experience. The success of the Academies in reaching and retaining students is directly related to their ability to provide real work experience, and wherever possible, a real paying job. Therefore, the Academies' programs provide work experience, and when a job is available and a student is prepared, they are given the opportunity to work part time for pay during the school year and summer. In addition, several of the academies operate entrepreneurial shops.

The four academies presently operate in 10 city high schools, serve 1,430 students, and are expected to expand to serve 5,000 students over the next three years.

Rationale:

Underachieving students need to experience, in concrete ways, the relationship of their education to the world of work, if they are to persevere, acquire the necessary skills for future employment, and graduate. Such an experience can only be provided by the public schools by entering into an explicit partnership with the business community.

In 1985, academy results indicated that 117 students graduated from three academies (one academy is too new to have graduates). Of these, approximately 50% are employed, 20% are pursuing further studies, and 6% are in the military. Thus, 76% of the graduating class has an occupation or is in school. Of the remainder, 6.8% are not presently seeking work, 13.7% are unemployed, and 4.3% were not contacted.

In 1984, the Philadelphia High School Academy Association was awarded a "private sector initiative commendation" by President Ronald Reagan for its "exemplary achievement in strengthening the nation's vocational educational system."

Resources Needed:

Funding:	On-going operating costs in the Philadelphia Business Academies average about $300 per student per year, with the school district contributing additional monies and human resources above those costs. Start-up costs of a new Academy depend upon the occupational focus and are always assumed by the school district. Typically, business and industry contribute a part of the increment cost to operate an Academy after start-up.
Program:	The unique feature of the Academies concept is the way in which the school district and business and industry work together to provide critical program resources. Without the active involvement of a substantial segment of the corporate sector, an Academy will not succeed. Thus, securing commitments from corporate executives for active participation in the Academies is a crucial planning task.
Facilities:	Specific needs will depend on the type of Academy being considered. The host school will have to provide secure, adequate space and renovate and equip appropriately. Collaborating businesses and industries may also supply additional work/training space.
Materials:	Both schools and business/industry need to insure that students have access to the most up-to-date equipment on which to train. Poor, out-dated equipment will insure failure when students look for out-of-school jobs. It is presently the responsibility of the school district to acquire "state-of-the-art" equipment for the program. Additional resources may sometimes come from business and industry.
Employment:	The most critical resource is the availability of job opportunities for students. Work stations are necessary to show students real world work requirements and to help them develop meaningful skills. However, the opportunity to work part-time, as well as the money that goes with it and the perceived likelihood of employment upon graduation, are often key student motivators.

Historical Perspective:

The Philadelphia High School Academies were initiated in 1969 by the Philadelphia Urban Coalition to provide disadvantaged, inner-city high school students with marketable job skills. They began as an action response to the many critical problems confronting young people in many of Philadelphia's inner-city neighborhoods: unemployment rates for minority youth at 50% or higher, high dropout rates, and high incidence of crime. The Coalition made a proposal to the business community and the school district to create a joint venture for career/vocational education. Today, 18 years later, the academies are a unique and active partnership in which business, labor, and the Philadelphia School District share responsibility or successfully linking basic skills to vocational training to a steady job to a paycheck.

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Strategy

- Student and Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem

- Individual Students

Domains for Action

- Instruction
- Teacher expectations, roles and behaviors
- Family support

Agencies Involved

- Intermediate Unit
- School Districts (19)

Pre-Referral Interventions With Teacher Assistance Teams
Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13

(applicable to grades K-12)

Purpose:

The purpose of the pre-referral intervention process is to help teachers plan effective instructional strategies for students with behavioral and/or achievement problems, to help these students experience success in regular classrooms, and to ultimately reduce the numbers of students needing special education.

Target Audience:

The target audience for this approach are both teachers and students. The approach supports teachers in their planning of more effective instructional experiences for students with behavioral and/or achievement difficulties.

Description:

Intermediate Unit 13's Exceptional Children's Division has been working with 19 districts in introducing and supporting a pre-referral intervention system. One district that has been using this approach for four years is Conestoga Valley, composed of one high school, one junior high, and four elementary schools. This district provides a good example of how such a system can work.

In Conestoga Valley schools, the referring teacher, confronted by a student with whom they are having little success, initiates the process by filling out a comprehensive behavioral checklist and pre-referral form, designed to help the teacher think about the problem student in a systematic way. The teacher may ask other teachers or the guidance counselor for their perceptions of the student and include those perceptions on the form. In some instances, this activity in itself may help a teacher figure out some ways of working more effectively with the student.

The next step is the presentation of teacher data as well as other relevant data at the monthly teacher assistance team meeting. The composition of the team may vary from school to school, but usually it includes two to three fellow teachers, staff specialists such as the school psychologist, and the principal. The first meeting is designed to assist the team arrive at a common understanding of the problem, establish realistic objectives in helping the student, and engage in a problem-solving discussion to determine the most effective way to reach these objectives.

Subsequent team discussions focus on the success in achieving the recommendations and in suggesting follow-up recommendations. Recommendations, or action strategies, may include classroom management suggestions (e.g., a "time out" signal communicated by teacher to student that indicates it is time to stop an inappropriate behavior, or to leave the room for a quiet, five minute "time out"), instructional methods strategies (e.g., student is expected to finish 50% rather than 100% of spelling list, a test may be read orally to student), or parent support strategies (e.g., parents sign assignment books nightly, use behavior chart for tardy child and provide immediate rewards, or set up and monitor nightly study period).

This approach contrasts with the more traditional psychological referral approach that lack preventive focus.

Rationale:

The concept of pre-referral interventions, facilitated by a teacher assistance team, rests upon the following assumptions about student outcomes, provision of services, and teacher needs:

- teachers can resolve many more problems when working together, and as part of a team, than by working alone
- in many situations a regular classroom teacher, with some assistance, can help a student with challenging learning and/or behavioral problems
- teachers will be better able to deal with subsequent students with learning and/or behavioral problems having been actively involved in a solution with past students
- special education services should be focused on students that have severe learning disabilities or other handicaps.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Evaluation of the pre-referral model of teacher assistance teams indicates that schools using this model make fewer referrals to special education, and test and/or place fewer students in the special education classrooms. For example, an Illinois school district achieved a reduction of potential referrals to special services by more than 50%. These evaluations also report an increase in effective interventions in the regular classroom.

During 1985-86, Conestoga Valley reports that over 200 individual student cases were referred to the teacher assistance teams, and 14 students were actually placed in special learning disabled classes, following the pre-referral intervention process. Teachers who have been engaged in the process have found it helpful; they report increased success with their problem students in the regular classroom. Referrals appear to be down, and fewer students are being placed in learning disabled classes than in previous years, especially at the elementary level. I.U. 13 plans to assess program impact by reviewing the psychological referral process over the last year, especially rates of referrals. In addition, I.U. 13 will use a curriculum-based assessment procedure to monitor students' academic achievement following the pre-referral intervention process.

School/Community Context:

I.U. 13 includes the cities of Lancaster and Lebanon, and is composed of a mixture of urban, suburban, and small rural towns. The students are predominantly white, and represent all levels of the income scale. The Conestoga Valley School District, northeast of Lancaster, is fairly typical of these districts. The dropout rate is low, and 43% of the students who graduate go on to four-year colleges.

Resources Needed:

Training:	Both teachers and support staff receive in-service training focusing on the issues related to format and procedures of the pre-referral intervention meetings, as well as on group process skills.
Support:	The active involvement of the school psychologist or similar support staff appears to be pivotal to the program's success. Also of critical importance is the involvement of the principal during meetings, and the principal's support for the application of follow-up strategies.

Historical Perspective:

There is a national concern about the increasing numbers of students being referred to special education, and once tested, almost automatically placed in special education. Research in this area of referral assessment and decision-making has concluded that the point of referral is the most significant moment in the special education process, when a student may be along a specific, irreversible path.

The districts in I.U. 13 are aware of the problem with over-identification of learning disability students, most clearly indicated by the proliferation of learning disabled classes over the last few years. They are also aware of the lack of sufficient funding for these classes. In addition, there is concern about the long-term impact of labeling and tracking students. Over the last four years, three districts have been addressing these issues through adopting a pre-referral intervention system. Last year, under the leadership of I.U. 13's Exceptional Children's Services Division, interested districts were invited to attend a series of in-service workshops that introduced the pre-referral intervention process to teachers and principals. The process was presented as a preventive strategy with a proven record of effectiveness. Districts that wanted to set up this model in their schools received follow-up training and technical assistance from I.U. 13, upon request. Today, 19 of the 22 I.U.'s districts are in various stages of implementation of the pre-referral intervention teacher assistance model.

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Strategy	**Domains for Action**	**Agencies Involved**
• Student and Environment-Oriented	• Curriculum • Instruction • Teacher role • Family support	• All elementary schools
Scope of Problem • Groups of Students		

Prevention of Academic Failure Program
West Chester Area School District

(applicable to K-6)

Purpose:

The goal of this early intervention program is to prevent primary (K-2) high risk students from experiencing failure in basic skills acquisition (reading and mathematics). A secondary goal is to give teachers more of an opportunity to make professional decisions regarding the instruction of these students.

Target Audience:

High risk K-2 students who score below the fiftieth percentile of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test or who are identified by their teacher.

Description:

West Chester's early intervention program has three major elements. The application of each of these elements will vary from school to school.

- A team approach. All K-2 teachers in each school are organized into two clinical teams that include school reading specialists, tutors, aides, case workers, and student teachers. Each team is headed by a teacher-leader who has been trained in group decision-making through the "quality circles" technique. This team plans and provides instruction for the children on their team. All children receive instruction two to three hours per day during the regular school year, with identified high risk students receiving additional instructions three hours per day for four weeks during the summer. Because of the team structure, students may receive instruction on a one-to-ten ratio or less.
- Outcomes-based curriculum. An outcomes-based curriculum is being developed in reading and math for K-2 that emphasizes mastery learning, time on task, criteria-referenced assessment, diagnostic-prescription teaching, higher order cognitive skills, creative/critical thinking, and problem solving.
- Reorganization of staffing patterns and time allocations. The program requires selected blocks of time for reading, math, and language arts, a four-week summer program for redirected and extended learning for high risk students made possible through the involvement and flexibility of specialists, additional staff, and a new staff position of "teacher-leader."

Rationale:

The following set of beliefs have guided the development of this program.

- Early academic intervention increases the opportunity for success for all children, and that to ignore early school failure will only increase the gaps that exist between high risk students and those students who are achieving at grade level.
- Early school-wide intervention reduces the likelihood of children being labeled as learning disabled students.
- In order to reduce the use of the referral system as a solution to children's academic problems, it is necessary to empower teachers to make the professional decisions regarding how best to structure these student's learning experiences.
- Early intervention programs must maximize learning opportunities by using the extended learning time of summer; a summer program can have a lasting effect, especially if it focuses on motivation and the development of a positive association with teachers.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Program effectiveness has been determined by both pre- and post-achievement tests and surveys of teachers and parents. Over 60% of those students identified as being "at risk" of academic failure in September 1985, were eliminated from this category in May 1986, following nine months of participation in the program. Approximately 75% of the incoming third graders were on grade level. In addition, the test scores of the three pilot schools were higher than the other six elementary schools. Evaluation also indicated that the smaller teacher-student ratio promoted greater instructional flexibility, better identification of student needs, more direct instruction at individual levels, peer-to-peer tutoring, improved self-esteem, and motivation.

School/District Context:

West Chester, a rapidly growing city of 75,000, contains a wide range of SES families primarily in the upper end of the scale. It is heavily influenced by nearby universities and the Route 202 corridor with its growing professional community. The schools are 14% minority (11% Black and 3% Hispanic). The district enrolls approximately 9,200 students.

Resources Needed:

Training: Teacher-leader training in group decision-making.

Funding: Approximately $250,000 was allocated by the Board for the total program, including summer (transportation and teacher salaries). Creative use of Chapter 1 and TELLS funds can aid in financial support of the program.

Time: Time needs to be allowed for all staff to participate in group planning.

Staff: Because of the declining enrollment at the middle school level, it became possible to reassign some middle school teachers as reading specialists to the elementary schools. These teachers and aides contribute greatly to the school's ability to meet individual student needs.

Historical Perspective:

The district has a record of commitment in providing for its primary grade students. Data from its Head Start and summer programs indicating that many of these students were entering school five months to a year behind other students, served as an impetus in finding new ways to meet their needs. In addition, there was the awareness that too many students were unprepared for third grade work. Another key factor that led to the program's development is an administration that believed that once the problem was identified, and resources and training were made available, school staff were in the best position to determine how their school should proceed.

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Strategy

- Student-Oriented (4)

Scope of problem

- Groups of Students

Domains for Action

- Special services
- Family support

Agencies Involved

- Middle School (1)

Program For Alienated Youth
C.E. McCall Middle School
Montoursville Area School District

(applicable to K-12)

Purpose:

The goal of this counseling program for disruptive or withdrawn youth is to improve students' self-concept and perceptions of school, and to strengthen students' commitment to the conventional social goals and activities that schooling represents. The improvement of student achievement is an intermediate objective that is expected to result from improved self-concept and improved social bonding.

Target Audience:

Students who are withdrawn, isolated or "turned off" to the regular school program are eligible to join the Program for Alienated Youth. Students may be referred to the program in one or more ways: (1) by teachers; (2) by other school personnel such as the Guidance Counselor, the Assistant Principal, or the School Nurse; and (3) by themselves. In addition, the counselor initiates contact with students in two situations: when students are assigned to the in-school suspension center or when students receive failing grades on their report cards.

Description:

The Program for Alienated Youth serves approximately 20 students at any one time, primarily through its one-on-one counseling and tutoring approach. The sole staff person, the Director of the program, sees students in scheduled appointments as well as on a drop-in basis for crisis counseling. The counselor's repertoire of strategies for working with disruptive or alienated youth includes:

- tutoring and coaching on classroom assignments and occasional peer tutoring
- counseling based on reality therapy and Adlerian psychology
- instruction in social skills and problem solving
- value clarification exercises
- after school tutoring
- lunchtime basketball practice and other after-school sports activities, on an occasional basis
- consultation with the Guidance Counselor and Assistant Principal, as needed
- Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) course for parents
- parent conferences, when feasible.

The duration of students' association with the Program for Alienated Youth depends on the severity and perseverance of the problem. The counselor tends to stay in touch with students over much of the school year, even after formal contact ends, by informally monitoring student progress and adjustment.

Rationale:

The Program for Alienated Youth regards student withdrawal or disruption as part of a growth inhibiting cycle. That cycle begins with wants and fears, but focuses on fears that elicit acting out behavior, defensiveness and other reactivity, and further withdrawing or disruptive behaviors. The counseling intervention seeks to stimulate a growth producing cycle instead. This also starts with wants and fears but focuses on accepting them. From acceptance can come the student's search for optional responses or behavior that lead to high risk-taking and proactivity, goal satisfaction and the reduction of fears, and positive social behaviors.

The Director believes that many student problems originate in the home. Parents' active participation in the program tends to produce changes in the child's behavior in half the time it otherwise would take. The counselor especially recommends the formation of parent sharing or support groups.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

The Director of the Program for Alienated Youth monitors student participants in informal and unsystematic rather than in systematic ways. The Director and other school staff perceive the program to be successful. They base their perception on:

- students' self-reports
- observations of students
- teachers' comments
- improvement in students' report card grades
- a decrease in students' referrals for disciplinary action.

Moreover, the school district, stimulated by the success of the middle school's program with individual students, has initiated discussion with the director about planning a student assistance program.

School Context:

The program operates in a middle school which enrolls 670 students. It is located in Montoursville, a town outside Williamsport, the area's largest city (10,000), where the economy is a mixture of light industry and agriculture. The population is primarily white middle and lower middle class.

Resources Needed:

Staff:	The essential staff person is a counselor certified in Social Restoration who contacts and talks with students and their parents. (The functions of testing and scheduling are performed by a regular school guidance counselor.)
Funding:	A pro-rated portion of $25,000, provided by the district, covers four days a week of the counselor's salary and a modest budget for materials and supplies. The school site budget covers such additional expenditures as audio-visual materials and incidental supplies, estimated at from $500 to $800 per year.
Time:	Flexibility for students to meet with the counselor during their study periods or free time is important. Time for the counselor to follow-up with students, confer with teachers and administrators, and contact parents is also necessary.
Space:	An office for counseling.

Historical Perspective:

The program was founded in 1975-76 because of a general feeling about the needs of withdrawn or disruptive youth and because of the availability of funding to establish an experimental program. External funds provided from community action program budgets paid for the program during its first four years. Since that time, the program has been supported by the regular school district budget.

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Strategy

- Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem

- All Students

Domains for Action

- Curriculum
- Family support
- Teacher role
- Special services

Agencies Involved

- All Elementary and Junior High Schools
- Community Health agencies

School Health Curriculum Project
Beaver Area School District
(applicable to K-9)

Purpose:

The goals of this project are:

- to introduce and adapt a nationally validated school health curriculum that emphasizes the concept of wellness and preventive health care
- to develop an awareness in the school community of the importance of adult role-modeling in communicating "wellness" concepts.

Target Audience:

The health curriculum is designed to reach all students from kindergarten to ninth grade.

Description:

The School Health Curriculum Project is a National Diffusion Network program that has been adapted to meet the needs of the Beaver Area School District. All students in all grades engage in curriculum that helps them: (1) learn about themselves and their own importance, (2) learn about what influences their lives, and (3) learn respect for themselves and their values. The program facilitates individual understanding of responsibility for the human body and how to deal with the biological, cultural, environmental and social factors that influence the body. These areas of concern are treated appropriately at each grade level. Grade level experiences revolve around the following central themes.

Kindergarten — Happiness in Being Healthy
Grade 1 — Super Me
Grade 2 — Sights and Sounds
Grade 3 — The Body: Its Framework and Movement
Grade 4 — Our Digestion, Our Nutrition, Our Health
Grade 5 — Our Lungs and Our Health
Grade 6 — Our Hearts and Our Health
Grade 7 — Living Well with Our Nervous System I
Grade 8 — Living Well with Our Nervous System II
Grade 9 — Developing a Wellness Plan for a Healthy Lifestyle

Each level stresses the prevention of health problems and the promotion of wellness. Activities at all levels encourage students to make responsible decisions that keep their body healthy. They are encouraged to make decisions by looking for choices, so they can learn at an early age that they can have some control over their body. The program emphasizes a participatory, experimential approach in which students work in small groups using various learning/teaching methods; exploring ideas through experiments, using different types of media, role playing, and exchanging ideas with peers.

> A Grade 1 example: Students view the film, "The Huffless, Puffless Dragon", discuss the concept of habits, use a smoke simulator to demonstrate the residue deposited in the respiratory tract as a result of smoking cigarettes, learn the "ABC Smoking Song", and play the game, "Happiness Is Clean Air." They also discuss, "Many people help us make up our minds and learn what to do, but when you are all by yourself, who makes your decisions?"

Approximately 30 hours, with lessons averaging 30 minutes in length, are taught at every grade level, K-9. Students in K-6 are taught health by their classroom teachers and in grades 7-9, the students are taught by teachers who hold secondary health certification.

The involvement of all elementary teachers in the health curriculum is deliberately designed to increase their awareness of wellness issues and to capitalize on their importance as role models. As a way of further increasing staff awareness about health issues, an in-service day was planned entirely around the wellness theme, with workshops ranging from the effects of family and organizational dynamics on health to caring for one's emotional health.

A unique aspect of this project is the involvement of parents and the community. During the first two years, the Medical Center of Beaver County, Department of Education and Research, conducted 14 evening classes that focused on topics the students cover in class, as well as on health topics of interest to parents. Parenting workshops are continuing. The community is involved through a newly formed Wellness Steering Committee that has developed an exercise program log and awards of wellness certificates to members of the community who have participated in kick-off events to encourage regular exercise programs.

Rationale:

The Beaver Area School District has selected and adapted a health program that supports their view about their role and responsibilities with respect to helping students achieve Pennsylvania's health goal. They believe that:

- they should emphasize a preventative approach to health issues, in order to minimize the negative consequences of an uninformed high school and future adult population
- school staff play a strategic role in serving as healthy models to students as they interact with and apply the curriculum's wellness principles
- to be most effective with students they need to include parents in the process of understanding the health curriculum and their own health needs
- community awareness of and involvement with wellness concepts and activities can assist the school district in its efforts.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

In their third year of the project, Beaver Area School District has already been able to clearly document their effectiveness. As a validated National Dissemination Network Program, the first year underwent a parent, teacher, and student evaluation conducted by Project R.I.S.E (Pennsylvania's NDN Facilitator Project). Results were very positive. The Beaver Area District collects yearly EQA (Educational Quality Assessment) data with the assistance of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Scores on the Health Knowledge subtest for fifth graders on the EQA increased from the 60th percentile to the 95th percentile (1984-85). As of the end of the 1985-86 year, grade four scored in the 99th percentile and grade six in the 98th percentile. Of the evaluation forms (1985-86) sent to all parents (62% were returned), 99% indicated a heightened awareness of the value of developing healthy family living patterns.

The project has had a deliberate impact beyond the classroom through the parent evening classes, the district's in-house "Staff Focus on Wellness", and the formation of a 14-member Community Steering Committee (physicians, dentists, physical education teacher, etc.) that is planning a long-term "Community Focus on Wellness" effort.

In fall 1986, the Beaver Area School Health Curriculum Project received national recognition from the Metropolitan Life Foundation HEALTHY ME initiative. They were one of 20 schools in the nation to receive a $5,000 award for a health program that is planned, sequential, multitopic and multigrade.

School/Community Context:

The Beaver Area School District is approximately 21 square miles of suburban, residential area. The 2,450 students represent a bimodal income level distribution with approximately 18% of the elementary children receiving a free or reduced price lunch. Less than 2% of the elementary students are minority, and approximately 8% of the secondary students are minority. The school population has decreased due, in part, to the steel mill exodus. The medical center and county court house draw many professional families.

Resources Needed:

Training:	Initial training of staff is essential, especially in providing staff with the opportunity to become familiar with the curriculum and to prepare materials needed in class during the year.

Funding: Initial training funds were provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. An original grant of $6,000 was expanded to pay for all consultant's and teacher's stipends for a summer workshop.

Materials: The curriculum calls for a steady supply of materials due to the "hands on" nature of the curriculum (e.g., eyeballs, lungs, hearts for dissection). In addition, student manuals, published by the National Center for Health Education, are necessary for every student each year, and range in cost from $2.50 to $4.00 each (211 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94108).

Historical Perspective:

In September 1983, the Beaver Area School District submitted its Long Range Plan 1983-87 to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The plan identified health as the curricular area "most in need of attention." EQA data had indicated low student achievement in this area, possibly explained by the fact that health was taught only at grade 9; drug and alcohol abuse prevention efforts were fragmented. The district believed that the concept of staying healthy was not being communicated as an important value to students. A district-wide health committee was charged with selecting or developing a comprehensive positive curriculum focusing on lifestyle goals and wellness in school year 1983-84. The committee found a strong congruence between their goals and the School Health Curriculum Project.

The most difficult start-up issue the project faced was staff concern about finding time to teach the curriculum. Might it be possible for elementary PE teachers to assume this responsibility instead of the regular classroom teacher? Use of C-BAM (Concerns-based Adoptions Model) allowed teachers to explore their concerns about this new curriculum. They came to recognize the importance of their direct involvement in teaching this curriculum if they were to serve as a positive role model for students. They were also promised and received the support of parents in collecting the necessary materials.

Implementation of the program began in June 1984 with a five-day workshop for 32 staff members and 14 parent volunteers. Year one, the program began with K-6 students, in year two, it expanded to the junior high school, and by year three, it had grown to include a changing ninth grade program. What began as an elementary level curriculum project has now grown to address parent needs and interests as well as to affect the health practices of the staff and the community.

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Strategy

- Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem

- All Students

Domains for Action

- Curriculum
- Instruction
- Incentives
- Peer culture

Agencies Involved

- Elementary Schools (2)

Team Accelerated Instruction — Mathematics
Summitview Elementary School
Waynesboro Area School District

(applicable to grades 3-6, and some 7th & 8th graders)

Purpose:

The purpose of Team Accelerated Instruction (TAI) is to improve academic achievement in mathematics, as well as to promote positive interpersonal relations and increase individual self-esteem and self-image in mathematics.

Target Audience:

TAI targets heterogeneous classrooms that contain students with a wide range of abilities (from gifted to learning disability students).

Descriptions:

TAI is a systematic, individualized mathematics curriculum built around essential math concepts and computational skills, from addition through pre-algebra. The materials for the curriculum include 13 instructional books for each level that provide students with the opportunity to practice new skills as well as review already learned skills at their own pace. TAI combines this individualized approach with cooperative learning.

Students work through the curriculum in small, homogeneous ability teaching groups for teacher-directed concept instruction as well as in small, heterogeneous student learning teams for structured practice and concept application. The homogeneous teaching groups are made up of 5-15 students (usually 3 in a class) who are working at approximately the same level; they meet for 15-20 minutes every 2-3 or 3-5 days, depending upon their needs and level, and focus on new math concepts that are then practiced in the learning team. The learning teams are heterogeneous groups, made up of high, low, and average achieving students; and a mix of boys and girls, and of racial, ethnic, mainstreamed and gifted students. In these teams, students do the following:

- work at their appropriate level in the TAI curriculum
- check each others' skill practice work (students complete a row of four or more problems and then have their partner check their answers; if all four are correct, the student proceeds to the next skill practice, but if one or more of the problems are incorrect, the student does another row of four problems)
- motivate one another to work quickly and accurately
- support and encourage each other.

Each team member contributes to weekly team awards based on mastery of unit tests, completing homework accurately, scoring 100% on fact tests, and mastery of cumulative tests. Teams are re-assigned regularly, allowing students to work cooperatively with a variety of peers.

The program emphasizes the following learning principles:

- rapid progress (students, working at an appropriate level, are encouraged by teachers and peers to progress rapidly)
- active involvement (students interact with one another, help, motivate, and tutor each other, and assume responsibility for their own learning and the learning of teammates).

Each day, several students serve as monitors who give out, check, and refile tests and homework. Monitors are designed to free the teacher from clerical duties, and, therefore, to assist in making the best use of teaching and learning time.

Summitview Elementary School (K-6) is one of several Waynesboro schools using TAI in grades 3-6. They have made a few modifications of the program. One was to assign an additional homework monitor. The work of the monitors helps each Summitview teacher quickly assess students daily performance (monitors place work that is 60% or less complete on top of daily work piles). In addition, approximately every six to eight weeks, the class leaves the TAI program to work in their basal math text in a content area that is especially appropriate for large group instruction, such as making graphs or measurement, or the review of basic skills. This is usually recommended for every three weeks. Teachers also use this time away from TAI to assess how well students are meeting district math objectives.

Teams that do well at Summitview are identified as "superteams" for the week, and receive recognition and rewards: announcements in bulletins and newsletters, and special privileges, such as juice breaks in class. All children contribute to a team's success, regardless of ability level. Success is determined by the number of units completed, and how well they are done. For example, one week a gifted math student and a low achieving student had recorded the highest number of points in the class and were both recognized equally for their achievement.

The TAI Mathematics is one of four student team learning methods developed by the Johns Hopkins Team Learning Project. The other three methods are: Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD), Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), and Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC).

All four cooperative learning methods incorporate team rewards (for any team that achieves at or above a designated criterion), individual accountability (the team's success depends on the individual learning of all members), and equal opportunity for success (students contribute to their teams by improving over their past performance). Completion is less important than the idea that all students can succeed.

Rationale:

The TAI Mathematics, as well as the other cooperative learning strategies, assume that:

- more learning takes place when students work together in teams to achieve shared goals
- using the team approach also: encourages students to help each other, motivates students to learn at a faster rate, frees the teacher to provide increased direct instruction to small groups and individuals, and allows students to develop more responsibility for their own learning
- all students will be more motivated to learn when they are rewarded for doing better than they have done in the past, rather than based on their performance in comparison to others.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Of 35 different studies on Student Team Learning methods, 29 (or 83%) found that students in Student Team Learning classes gained significantly more in achievement than did students in traditionally taught classes studying the same objectives. With few exceptions, effects of Student Team Learning methods have been equally strong for students with high, average, and low achievement levels, and in urban, rural and suburban schools.

Some of the largest effects of Student Team Learning methods have been found in six studies of TAI. Across all six studies, the TAI classes gained an average of twice as many grade equivalents on standardized mathematics computation measures as traditionally taught control classes. Two studies of TAI found that this method increased liking and respect between black and white students. Studies have also shown that the use of Student Team Learning methods, and particularly TAI, significantly increased the self-esteem of all students, and reduced the degree to which students rejected their less rapidly progressing classmates.

Records of student gains in Waynesboro schools using TAI are promising. In a fourth grade class at Mowry Elementary School, the average gains on the Iowa Achievement Test were 1.4 years overall (1.8 in math concepts, 1.3 in problem solving, and 1.2 in computation). Three learning disabled students, who were mainstreamed into the same TAI classroom, demonstrated gains of more than one year in all math areas. A fifth grade class at Summitview demonstrated approximately 1.5 years average gain in overall math on the Iowa, including a 1.9 average gain in math concepts. In addition, student interest and motivation is high.

Teachers report that students actually "groan" when it is time to put their daily math work aside for other subject matter. Several students have moved through district goals at such a fast pace that teachers are now reassessing the total math program so as to better accommodate these students. Teachers have noted an improvement in student attitudes about math, and in their self-esteem and perception of their capabilities. Teachers believe that the program is helping them to be more effective with a wider range of students and to increase their ability to quickly assess and instruct individual students. The frequent grouping changes has allowed them to be more flexible in meeting these needs. In addition, teachers see this as an individualized program without the accompanying management problems traditionally associated with an individualized program.

School/Community Context:

The Waynesboro Area School District is located in south central Pennsylvania, and is best described as a small town surrounded by rural areas. There are 7.5% minority students in the district.

Resources Needed:

Materials:	The TAI-Mathematics curriculum includes a set of student workbooks for each grade level, and supportive teacher materials. A classroom set for each grade level (3-6) is approximately $420. Materials can be purchased from: Mastery Education Corporation, 85 Main Street, Watertown, MA 02171 (1-800-225-3214, toll free).
Training:	In-service on the use of the materials is not essential, but useful. Such training could be obtained from the John Hopkins Team Learning Project (see Contact) or, as in the case of Summitview, through the expertise of an experienced TAI teacher within the school, district, or region.

Historical Perspective:

The TAI Mathematics curriculum is a product of the Johns Hopkins Team Learning Project. The project has conducted continual research on the effectiveness of this strategy through the leadership of Robert E. Slavin. His work has focused on the relationship of cooperative learning and student achievement, with a special focus on urban, integrated classrooms.

The curriculum was introduced six years ago at Waynesboro's Mowry I Elementary building. Today, all 3-6 grade teachers at Summitview Elementary School are involved, including teachers in learning disabled classrooms and other Mowry Elementary classrooms. Teachers were given the option to use this approach following extensive observations of actual classroom application and discussion. Throughout this process, the curriculum received the enthusiastic support of the school principal.

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Strategy

- Student and Environment-Oriented

Scope of Problem

- Groups of Students

Domains for Action

- Special services
- Family support

Agencies Involved

- High Schools (19)
- Junior/Middle Schools (12)
- Elementary (5)
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- Mental Health Agencies

Truancy Intervention Program
Counseling or Referral Assistance (CORA) Services*

(applicable to upper elementary and high school)

Purpose:

The CORA Truancy Intervention Program (TIP) is designed to assist students with high absentee rates establish a positive direction in their life that would result in returning to formal schooling or connecting with alternative education.

Target Audience:

The primary target for this program are Philadelphia middle and high school students who have a high absenteeism record for less than one year, are alienated from school, and who have been referred to the program by their school counselor, the home and school visitor, or a probation officer. A secondary target are the families of these students.

Description:

The TIP project provides services for all public and non-public schools in the Philadelphia Area School District, and is currently working with 180 students and their families. The majority of these students are from high schools (57%), 38% coming from junior/middle schools, and 5% from elementary schools.

The families of these students are invited to participate through the school counselor. There is no fee for participating families. The program is based upon an interventive counseling model in which guided group discussions are a primary strategy. Students attend six weekly small group sessions (day or evening) that emphasize positive peer group interaction. These sessions focus on the following areas for discussion:

- self-esteem
- communication with family and at school
- decision making
- peer pressure and drug and alcohol use
- career exploration
- problem solving and values.

During the six-week period, emphasis is placed on enhancing students' perception of their self-worth. In addition, counselors conduct assessments and diagnostics designed to reveal specific student needs that may be academic, physical, or pyschological. As specific needs are identified, students are assisted in finding appropriate support services. For example, it was determined that one student who had repeated third grade three times could not read, and had very negative feelings about school. Special tutoring assistance was sought in order to see that this student attained grade level reading skills in combination with the counseling sessions. Other students needing special assistance with drug or alcohol abuse problems, speech and language disabilities, teen pregnancy, or psychological counseling would then be referred to an appropriate supplementary program either within CORA or to other outside agencies. Each student in the program explores alternative strategies for improving school attendance, and develops an attendance plan of action for their school and/or a plan of action for alternative education.

Students and their parents meet in several group sessions together. One such session deals with communication. In this session, students and their parents participate in a shared and guided exploration of communication strategies. If parents/families reveal problems beyond the scope of the program, they too are assisted by the TIP counselor in identifying an appropriate source of assistance.

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*CORA Services, Inc. is a multifaceted, community-based, private non-profit agency that offers professional services to children/youth and their families, primarily within the northwest area of Philadelphia.

The TIP counselor also serves as an advocate for the student, interceding with individual teachers, counselors, and other administrators at the school as needed. This role becomes especially important in paving the way for the returning student and in finding ways to keep the student in school.

Following the six-week period, the TIP counselor continues contact with the student and the family through phone calls every two weeks for a three-month period.

Rationale:

CORA staff figure that 50% of the children served by their agency (25,000 parents and youth during 1985) are "not at ease" in their learning environment. Counselors in the TIP program of CORA work exclusively with children who are, for various reasons, alienated from school.

The TIP program operates with the following guiding beliefs.

- A holistic response is required when working with youth at risk, and this means including the youth's family in the process of problem solving.
- Youth at risk can benefit from the small group-directed discussion model that focuses on the mastery of behaviors critical to their success in school, work and society (e.g., communications, decision-making, and self-esteem).
- The best use of community resources for dealing with youth at risk are intervention and prevention.
- Intervention can also succeed if there is a close collaboration between the school and the community agency.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

TIP has kept careful records and conducted follow-ups on students who have been involved in the program. Improved attendance was determined by comparing school attendance sheets before and after program involvement. In addition, phone contact and visits with parents and school counselors supplied additional attendance data which were calculated as follows:

- 72 (67%) returned to formal schooling; of these 72 students, 49.3% showed an improvement in attendance by the end of the three-month follow-up period
- 23 (21%) were assisted in being connected with various alternative education settings, appropriate to their needs
- 7 (6.5%) completed the program and entered the workforce
- 5 (6.8%) were not reconnected with school nor were they connected with a positive alternative.

Many of those students who did not demonstrate attendance improvement appeared to have family/personal problems that outweighed their truancy problem. TIP counselors were able to connect some of these students with some form of ongoing psychological counseling. Two students needed assistance with a perceptual problem and with an auditory problem, and were also receiving family counseling. Assistance in finding full-time employment is only offered after staff has determined that further education is of little interest to the youth after experiencing several difficult years in school. Counselors determined that five students and families who were not connected with any positive alternative faced an overwhelming amount of personal and financial problems that required assistance beyond the scope of TIP. Attempts to link them with continued support were unsuccessful.

School/Community Context:

The students in TIP live in a variety of Philadelphia communities. In Philadelphia, of the 17.59% single parent families headed by females, 52.61% live below the poverty line (1980 Census data). This figure is almost 10% higher than the state average. Most of the TIP students are in high school and are around 15 years of age. Approximately 13% are black, 5% are Hispanic, and the remainder are white. About 47% live with only their mother, and 44% live with both parents.

Funding: Programming for TIP has been supported by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

Resources: This intervention model stresses working with the students in a non-school environment. The location, therefore, should not only be conveniently located but would be most suitable in a home-like, comfortable setting.

Historical Perspective:

CORA's humble beginnings have grown to include a 55,000 square foot site in Fox Chase, a satellite facility in the Adams Avenue area of Philadelphia, 65 mobile mini-sites, a transportation fleet of 24 vans and school buses, and 270 educational and counseling personnel. CORA's goal, from the beginning, has been to develop preventive intervention strategies for children/youth and their families. CORA has been led by Sister Charity Kohl, whose clinical psychology background and her concern about deinstitutionalizing youth care has been its driving force.

TIP is a relatively new program for the agency that has been working with youth at risk and their families for the last 15 years. The development of TIP and its emphasis on truant youth came about because of the director's concern about the shift in status of truants and her awareness of the growing problem. During the early 70's, truancy (as a status offense) was removed from the adjudication process for juveniles in Pennsylvania. Intervention or remediation was then perceived as the responsibility of local and state governments through their public welfare (human service) systems, and removed from the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system. Funding for such services was initially provided through Pennsylvania P.L. 148. Subsequently, at least in the Philadelphia area, such funding has increasingly been siphoned from such primary intervention services into support of more serious family dysfunction services resulting in abused and neglected children moving into placement. The truant youth as status offenders are no longer being tracked, and are indeed no longer eligible for subsidized services.

In view of this situation, CORA proposed to provide a unique out-of-school counseling model that would target this elusive and ignored group of at-risk youth. The Director was able to secure funds from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency in order to demonstrate this intervention model. Based upon the success of their first year's effort, the Commission is supporting year two. Future funds will be sought from the City of Philadelphia.

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SECTION V

STRATEGIES FOR PLANNING

This section begins with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's recommendations that the problems of students at risk be considered, where appropriate, through Long-Range Planning. It then provides educators who are responsible for planning programs to improve their schools' success with students at risk, with:

- a description of the Program Development Evaluation Method used by Johns Hopkins researchers to help school-based demonstration projects improve both their project plans and the implementation of those plans
- an overview of four obstacles that school staff need to confront early in their planning.

Addressing the Problem of Students At Risk Through the Process of Long-Range Planning

The Pennsylvania Department of Education believes that schools throughout the state can become more successful with more students. The best evidence for this belief is the results of the research reviewed in Section II and the programs and projects described in Sections III and IV. The Department further believes that succeeding with more students is a difficult and complex task; that it will require fundamental changes in the way teachers and students work together, in the way school staffs work with parents and the community, and in how schools are organized and managed; and that only through careful study, planning, and experimentation will we discover together how to accomplish this task. Finally, the Department believes that given the complexity and importance of the task, it can best be addressed through the process of Long-Range Planning. It therefore urges Pennsylvania districts and schools to consider, where appropriate, the problem of students at risk during their current round of Long-Range Planning. It further suggests that this resource book provides some useful information to support that process. Specifically, Section III reviews some specific needs assessment strategies, Section IV describes some alternative approaches schools and districts are trying, and this section provides some planning suggestions.

Program Development Evaluation Method

One of the major outcomes of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP) Alternative Education Program was the development of a method to help school staff overcome problems frequently associated with large-scale school improvement efforts. These problems included:

- ambiguities about the nature and scope of needs/problems to be addressed, and therefore, about project goals and objectives
- lack of theory to guide the selection or development of interventions to achieve those goals and objectives
- the selection of interventions of unknown strength and integrity
- little commitment to evaluation as an integral part of project development and implementation; and a deep concern about how required evaluation results would be used
- an unstable project environment that affects changes in project goals, objectives, and interventions (Gottfredson, 1982; p.48).

The method was developed by Johns Hopkins University researchers who were to evaluate the 17 school demonstration projects funded under the OJJDP's program. From their review of the literature on organizational change and their experience in working with schools, they formulated the following assumptions.

- Projects guided by explicit theories that can be translated into action will be most effective.
- Projects will be implemented with enthusiasm, be strongest, and contribute most to knowledge of school improvement if the theory on which the project is based is regarded as sensible by project implementers and agrees with evidence from previous research and evaluation.
- Effective implementation of an intervention or innovation is more likely if blueprints for the intervention are available and if implementation is guided by data about the extent to which project activities are in accord with the blueprint.
- Effective adoption of an innovation is more likely when explicit plans for adoption are available and when these plans are likely to overcome obstacles to organizational change.
- Projects will become more effective in the presence of "evaluation pressure." Evaluation pressure takes many forms, some of which are pressure to focus on theory, and to heed relevant information from previous research and data about program strength, fidelity, and effectiveness.
- Organizations that internalize these principles will be more effective than those that simply comply with them (Gottfredson, 1984; pp. 1101-1102).

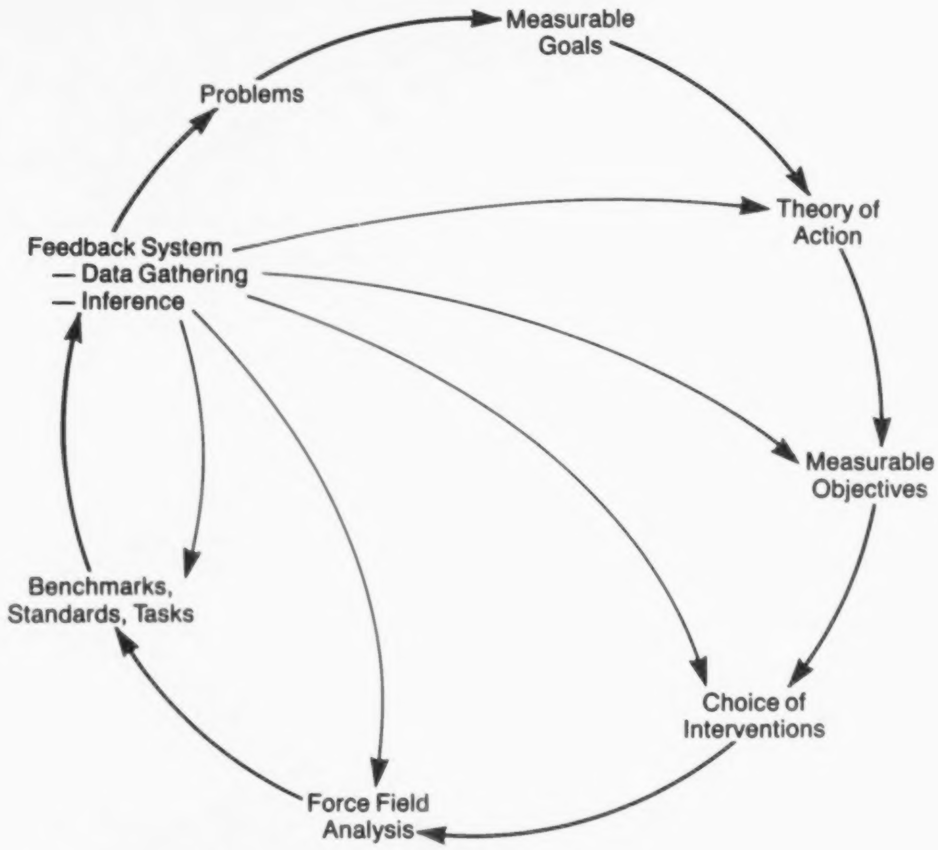
Guided by these assumptions, the researchers designed the Program Development Evaluation Method. The method involved reseachers and 17 school project staffs cooperatively in:

- identifying problems and setting organizational goals (e.g., type and amount of success specific groups of students at risk should achieve)

- developing theories of action that set forth hypotheses as to why the problems exist
- defining measurable objectives that specify the changes in behavior, attitude, or organizational structures expected
- selecting or developing interventions that will achieve those objectives
- conducting a force field analysis to determine resources that are available to facilitate and obstacles that might prevent implementation of the interventions
- developing strategies for implementing the interventions, given the results of the force field analysis
- establishing critical benchmarks (decisions or action points), tasks (who will do what when), and standards for implementation
- developing a feedback information system that provides input to each of the activities that make up the Program Development Evaluation Method — feedback that can be used to improve the project design, implementation, and effects (see Figure V-1).

Figure V-1

The Program Development Evaluation Method


Measurable Goals
Problems
Theory of Action
Feedback System
— Data Gathering
— Inference
Measurable Objectives
Benchmarks, Standards, Tasks
Choice of Interventions
Force Field Analysis

Gottfredson, G.D. (1984). A theory-ridden approach to program evaluation. *American Psychologist, 39*, 1101-1112.

This method is consistent with the basic steps of Long-Range Planning: needs assessment, action planning, implementation, and evaluation. However, it differs from Long-Range Planning in several critical respects. First, there is the emphasis on collaboration of project and evaluation staff. Second, there is the use of data from the feedback system at each step in the process. And third, there is the inclusion of the step of developing a theory of action.

The step of developing a theory of action is most easily described by example (Gottfredson, 1984).

- The Project PATHE proposal set forth project goals that reflected the guidelines prepared by the National Institute for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (see Section II for a description of those guidelines). It also presented the general approach the project would follow.
- Initial meetings of project managers and evaluators revealed an eclectic, loosely connected theory and a set of 32 discrete activities. The theory resembled a list that might be generated if one were to pull key variables from every major theory of delinquency and to add to it variables related to local sources that contribute to schools' problems. In all, 37 causes of delinquency were named.
- Collaborative program development to remove redundancies and clarify causal relationships produced the theory shown in Figure V-2. This theory identified a critical triangle of interrelated student behaviors and attitudes that had to be changed in order to reduce delinquent behavior and increased educational and occupational attainment. It emphasized five school factors that had to be altered to bring about the desired changes in student behaviors and attitudes. Finally, the theory acknowledged background factors affecting school and student factors, but made clear that the focus of the project was the school and its effects.
- As the project evolved, its primary intervention was to establish and maintain an organizational structure that facilitated shared decision making among school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community agencies. The project provided training in assessing needs, researching problems, defining objectives, developing and implementing plans, assessing progress, and redefining strategies. It also established a team structure to implement school change.
- The project's initial 32 activities became clustered in five areas of intervention. The activities in each area had similar objectives, helping managers to develop consensus about the focal points of the project.

In reviewing the relative success of the 17 projects (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Cook, 1983), the researchers concluded that projects' use of the Program Development Evaluation Method affected how well project interventions were designed and implemented. In addition, they found that the step of developing an explicit theory helped school staff not only develop a shared understanding of the problem and of possible causes of the problem, but also to:

- establish objectives for their project and select interventions that promised to achieve those objectives
- clarify for themselves how each staff member would contribute to the project
- identify data that needed to be collected to provide information regarding intervention and project effects
- use the data to modify goals, theory, objectives, interventions, and implementation activities.

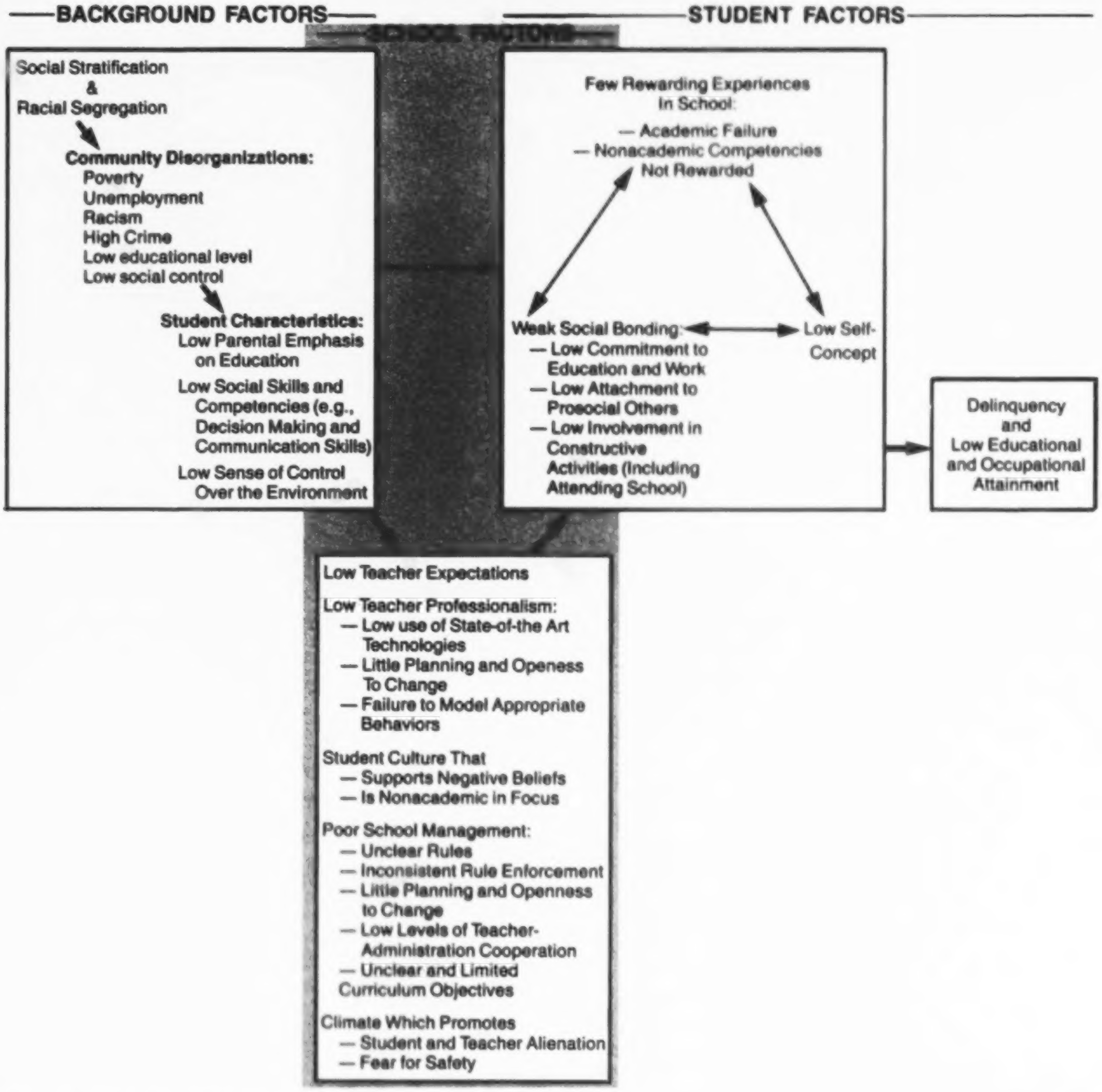
The researchers also note that the method is demanding in that it requires school staffs to step back from the day-to-day operations, to acquire a knowledge base, and to undertake conceptual and analytic tasks. Frequently, school staffs need training and outside assistance to meet these requirements (Gottfredson, 1984).

Obstacles to Planning and Implementing Changes

Talk with school staff about the problem of students at risk and you are bound to hear these obstacles: family background and home conditions over which the school has no control, rising standards imposed from outside, the lack of resources, and current school structures. For a school staff to successfully plan and implement changes aimed at increasing their effectiveness with students at risk, these obstacles need to be confronted.

Figure V-2

Project PATHE Action Theory


BACKGROUND FACTORS
SCHOOL FACTORS
STUDENT FACTORS
Social Stratification & Racial Segregation
Community Disorganizations:
Poverty
Unemployment
Racism
High Crime
Low educational level
Low social control
Student Characteristics:
Low Parental Emphasis on Education
Low Social Skills and Competencies (e.g., Decision Making and Communication Skills)
Low Sense of Control Over the Environment
Few Rewarding Experiences In School:
— Academic Failure
— Nonacademic Competencies Not Rewarded
Weak Social Bonding:
— Low Commitment to Education and Work
— Low Attachment to Prosocial Others
— Low Involvement in Constructive Activities (Including Attending School)
Low Self-Concept
Delinquency and Low Educational and Occupational Attainment
Low Teacher Expectations
Low Teacher Professionalism:
— Low use of State-of-the Art Technologies
— Little Planning and Openess To Change
— Failure to Model Appropriate Behaviors
Student Culture That
— Supports Negative Beliefs
— Is Nonacademic in Focus
Poor School Management:
— Unclear Rules
— Inconsistent Rule Enforcement
— Little Planning and Openness to Change
— Low Levels of Teacher-Administration Cooperation
— Unclear and Limited Curriculum Objectives
Climate Which Promotes
— Student and Teacher Alienation
— Fear for Safety

Note — Variables in all capital letters are strictly targeted by a PATHE intervention.

Family Background and Home Conditions

The association between family background and students' lack of success in school is strong (see Section I). Principals, teachers, counselors, and school workers experience the relationship every day. They can readily share anecdotes dramatizing how family conditions make it almost impossible for their students to succeed.

Yet, in the very telling of these stories, school staff are failing to recognize the evidence of research that family background, though strongly associated with school success, does not determine student failure. What that research suggests is that students' daily experience in school determines their success, that programs and instruction will enable most students to develop and succeed if they build directly on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students bring to school and if they carefully control the difficulty of learning tasks assigned.

To overcome this obstacle of seeing family background as the determinent of school success, school staffs need to:

- confront openly their beliefs about what conditions contribute to students' failure in school
- accept responsibility for the conditions in their school and classrooms that may be contributing to student failure, and determine how they can best be modified
- reach out in highly personal and direct ways to elicit whatever help and support they can obtain from students' families.

Rising Standards

When exploring the idea of adapting programs and instruction to enable students to succeed in school, school staff raise the obstacle of standards. School staff are sensitive about standards these days, as much of the current reform movement has been toughening all kinds of educational standards — standards that people believe have been weakened over the last 20 years.

Yet, nowhere in the research on students at risk has the suggestion been made to raise or lower standards. What has been emphasized is the need for clear standards of what students should be learning and how students should be behaving. What has been emphasized is the need for flexibility in how those standards are achieved, flexibility that increases the probability that all students will achieve them.

To overcome this obstacle, school staffs need to clarify for themselves the standards that will give meaning to their schools: standards for student behavior and standards regarding what knowledge, skills, and attitudes must be learned by all students. Having clarified their standards, school staff need to determine where they must be flexible if all students are to develop the habits of behavior, and the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to meet those standards. Current research suggests that school staffs may need to be more flexible, for example, about how much content they try to cover during a given time period; about instructional methods, materials and incentives; about the roles students are asked to play; and about the amount of time provided for mastering a particular task.

Lack of Resources

Discussions about meeting the needs of students at risk, and about developing multiple approaches for helping students to meet school standards, will lead school staff to talk about the obstacle of resources. They will talk of the need for more teachers, more reading and mathematics specialists, more counselors and psychologists, and more social workers. They will talk of the need for expanded early childhood programs, remediation programs, special education programs, co-curricular programs; and health, counseling, and other special services for youth. And because there is little hope for substantial increases in funds to employ new staff and to expand programs and services, the talk of becoming more successful with students at risk will flounder.

To overcome this obstacle, schools staffs have to accept the reality that significant new resources will not become available. Instead, they have to look within themselves and within their school/community. With respect to themselves, school staff need to address how they work with each other. In many schools, teachers work alone most of the time. When faced with lack of success with individuals or groups of students, they either live with that failure or initiate a referral procedure that may, in time, assign the students to other staff who are also essentially working alone.

Other schools, as illustrated by the examples in Sections III and IV, are creating teams of teachers, specialists, and social workers that are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that a group of students do achieve school goals and objectives, and they are providing those teams with significant discretionary authority to accomplish that charge. In addition, some schools are creating teacher support teams to help teachers design new ways of working with failing or difficult students. Finally, other schools are creating staff teams to develop and implement alternative programs to help older students modify behaviors that are putting them at risk.

As a second option, school staff can reach out and obtain support from groups of persons who exist in every school community. They can:

- use students as a resource, either by involving them in cooperative learning, such as the "student team learning" process, or by training and using them as peer or cross-age tutors

- reach out to family members (parents, older siblings, grandparents) for support, providing them through home visitation and parent groups, information, instruction, and materials that they can use to help their children succeed
- seek volunteers from the community (parents, senior citizens, and others) to come to school to tutor students needing more individual attention and assistance
- negotiate with other community organizations for the development of collaborative, mutually supportive programs and services for children and youth.

A common theme that appears in the effective schools' literature is how school staffs augment their resources by involving students, family, and other community members and agencies, in support of schools' goals and programs.

School Structures and Patterns of Educational Practice

Even when school staff discover that they can address the first three obstacles, their efforts can be thwarted by school structures and patterns of educational practice. The structures and patterns are described in the recent studies of school practice (e.g., Goodlad, 1984; Sizer, 1984; Powell, Farrar & Cohen, 1985). Goodlad, for example, refers to the "commonplaces of schooling": teaching practices, content or subject matter, instructional materials, physical environment, activities, human resources, evaluation, time, and organization. The educational historians (e.g., Cuban, 1986) note the persistence of these structures and patterns, and suggest that they interact with each other in mutually supportive ways. They caution against simplistic solutions for inherent dilemmas in the mission and structure of schools. They describe the failure of recurrent reform movements and innovations to modify substantially these structures and patterns of practice.

Yet, to be more effective with the diversity of students entering school; to help all students to become engaged in classroom and school life, to teach more effectively the knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with the goals of self-esteem, citizenship, family living, health, and work; and to achieve traditional academic goals, requires school staff to question current structures and patterns of practice. An example of this kind of questioning is demonstrated by the Coalition of Essential Schools that is co-sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Independent Schools.

As described by Sizer (1986), the staff of the Coalition schools share the common concerns that too many high school students are too little engaged in their schooling and too few students are acquiring essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes. To address these concerns, each school's staff, working with its students, parents, and district leadership, are seeking to identify changes that need to be made in school structures and in patterns of practice. These working groups are questioning the multitude of purposes high schools are asked to perform, the fragmented programs of most high schools, the rigid age-grade grouping of students and the use of segregated tracks, the roles of teacher and student, the length of class periods, teacher loads in terms of numbers of students, the use of evaluation procedures designed to differentiate students and distribute them on a normal curve, rather than to assess mastery of subject matter and ability to perform at specified levels. In making plans and changes, Coalition schools view themselves as conducting experiments to test the intended and unintended effects of new designs. In carrying out their experiments, they are accepting as legitimate the constraints of their current budgets and staff.

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RESOURCE BOOK FEEDBACK FORM

Directions: To assist the Pennsylvania Department of Education in its effort to build upon this resource book, please complete this feedback form by **September 30, 1987.** Send it to: Director, Bureau of Basic Education Support Services, Pennsylvania Department of Education, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333.

We are asking you to provide your name, address and telephone number in case we want to obtain additional information from you.

Name: ______________________

Title: ______________________

Address: ______________________

____

Telephone: ______________________

Approximate Date Resource Book Received ______________________

Date This Form Was Completed

____

A. Rate the extent to which you agree that each statement applies to you **for each section** of the resource book. Place the appropriate number in each box.

4 = Strongly Agree
3 = Agree
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree

Statement	**Section I "Problem"**	**Section II "Research"**	**Section III "Use of Data"**	**Section IV "Approaches"**	**Section "Planning"**
1. Made me aware of new data, ideas, approaches					
2. Affected the way I think about the problem or what schools can do					
3. Stimulated me to initiate discussions about content					

B. Have you used or referred to any content of the resource book? Please answer "yes" or "no" for **each** section.

Statement	**Section I** **"Problem"**	**Section II** **"Research"**	**Section III** **"Use of Data"**	**Section IV** **"Approaches"**	**Section V** **"Planning"**
1. Used or referred to content in staff meetings or inservice workshops	________	________	________	________	________
2. Used or referred to content in a planning group	________	________	________	________	________
3. Other uses: ____________					
____________		________	________	________	________

4. Please describe your uses of the content of the resource book that you believe might be helpful to other state and local leaders concerned about the problem of students at risk. For example, what content did you use? in what form? with whom? under what circumstances? and to what effects? (Feel free to attach materials that you developed — e.g., agendas, handouts, transparencies, etc.)

C. The development of this resource book is a beginning. We are interested in receiving: (1) specific suggestions regarding questions or topics that you would have liked addressed in the resource book, or (2) content and/or examples that you know about that you believe should be included. Please list your suggestions under the appropriate heading below. (Please feel free to use and attach a separate piece of paper, if needed.)

1. Data reflecting the problem of students at risk (Section I):

2. Research and evaluations suggesting schools can make a difference with students at risk (Section II):

3. Examples of assessment systems and approaches schools are implementing or have institutionalized to address the problem of students at risk (Sections III and IV):

4. Planning experiences and methods (Section V):